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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Forest department takes possession of 5 acres of HMT land

BENGALURU, 25 OCT

Forest officials on Friday took possession of five acres of land under the custody of the Hindustan Machine Tools (HMT). A statement from the Karnataka Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre said a huge park would be developed on the land. The officials of the Forest Department went with an earthmover and recovered 5 acres of vacant land.It said that the HMT had sold more than 165 acres of forest land under its possession for a mere Rs 300 crore to various private and government agencies. The land has suddenly got prominence ever since Union Minister for Steel H D Kumaraswamy said he would revive the HMT and bring back its glory. Khandre has claimed that a total of 599 acres of land belongs to the forest department and he would get it back. *—Salar News*

Techie crashes into a barricade near HAL Road, dies

BENGALURU, 25 OCT

A 21-year-old techie died on the spot after he lost control of his bike and crashed into a barricade on HAL Old Airport Road early on Friday morning. The deceased is Rohan, a Kerala-based software engineer who had recently shifted to Dodda Banaswadi in the City and was employed at a private firm in Marathahalli. The accident took place around 3am when Rohan was riding near a railway bridge in Kartik Nagar, police said. The biker failed to notice the barricade on the road and crashed into it suffering severe injuries. Traffic police have registered a case. *—Salar News*

Assam to ban internet on Sunday for govt exam

GUWAHATI, 25 OCT

Mobile internet services will remain suspended across Assam from 8.30am to 4pm on Sunday for the conduct of a government recruitment exam, an official notification said on Friday. This would be the third such instance in two months. Mobile internet services were earlier suspended on two days in September during the conduct of similar exams by the state-level recruitment commission. Written examinations by the Assam State School Education Board (ASSEB) for Grade 4 posts will be conducted in two shifts in 28 districts on Sunday.'Altogether 8,27,130 candidates have applied to appear in the recruitment examination to be conducted for HSLC level posts in the first shift from 9 am to 11.30 am at 1,484 centres. A total of 5,52,002 candidates have applied to appear in the examination to be conducted for Class VIII level posts in the second shift from 1.30 pm to 4 pm at 808 centres. *—PTI*

Cyclone Dana spares WB, Odisha of major damage

Odisha sees zero casualties, 1 death reported in West Bengal

BHUBANESWAR/ KOLKATA, 25 OCT

Cyclone Dana spared Odisha and West Bengal of any severe damage to infrastructure while flight and rail operations resumed on Friday after the cyclonic storm completed landfall, triggering heavy rains and uprooting of trees and electric poles.

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi asserted that no fatality report has been received so far and the state achieved its 'zero casualty mission', while West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee said one person died due to the natural calamity.

The severe cyclonic storm Dana completed its landfall around 8.30 am on Friday and the system took at least eight and half hours to enter the landmass, the IMD said.

The landfall of 'Dana' started around 12.05 am on Friday between Bhitarkanika in Kendrapara and Dhamra in Bhadrak district of Odisha with wind speeds of around 110 kmph.

Strong winds sweep through Dhamra in the aftermath of cyclone Dana, in Bhadrak district of Odisha on Friday **PHOTO: PTI**

People in Odisha's Kendrapara district, which was on the path of cyclone Dana, heaved a sigh of relief as the severe cyclonic storm largely spared the coastal district on Friday.

While there is no report of loss of life and property, tidal surges made inroads into some of the villages and agriculture fields have come to light, officials said.

However, an elderly woman died at a cyclone shelter in Odisha's Kendrapara district, officials said on Friday.

Majhi said all the roads blocked by uprooted trees would be cleared during the day as the rescue team personnel had already started working as soon as the intensity of wind reduced on Thursday.

Majhi said many electrical installations like poles and transformers were damaged and were being repaired.

"By 6pm on Friday, electricity will be restored in all places including the worst-hit Kendrapara, Balasore and Bhadrak district," he said.

Mamata on Friday said administration evacuated around 2.16 lakh people from the low-lying areas.

Banerjee, who held a review meeting at the state secretariat Nabanna after spending the night there to monitor the situation, directed the officials to ensure that relief materials reach all those affected by the cyclone.

Flight operations resumed at Kolkata airport in West Bengal from 8 am on Friday after being suspended since Thursday.

Flight and train services also resumed in Bhubaneswar on Friday even though cyclone Dana tore through the Odisha coast since midnight. *—PTI*

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FROM 20,000

Germany triples visa quota for Indians to 90,000

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

In a boost to India-Germany relations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that Germany will expand its annual visas for skilled Indian workers from 20,000 to 90,000. Modi on Friday hailed the strengthening ties between India and Germany, citing recent collaborations as evidence of their deepening friendship.

Speaking at the 18th Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business 2024, Modi said, "On one hand, the CEO Forum meeting is being held here, on the other hand, our navies are practising together.

German naval ships are on a port call in Goa.

Modi said that this year marks the completion of 25 years of India-Germany strategic partnership and added that the next 25 years are going to take this partnership to new heights.

Modi welcomed the release of the "Focus on India" document by the German Cabinet, which outlines how two strong democracies and leading economies can cooperate for global good.

Inviting German businesses to invest in the country, Modi said there is no better place for investment than India and this is the right time to join the country's growth story. He added that India is becoming a major hub for diversification, de-risking, trade and manufacturing, and it provides huge business opportunities for German firms. For investors and businesses, he said, "what could be a better place than India?" *—ANI*

PHOTO: PTI

India will work for peace in Ukraine: PM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia are a matter of concern and India is ready to make every possible contribution for restoration of peace. His remarks came after talks with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who called upon India to contribute to find a political solution to the conflict in Ukraine that has been raging for a long time. Modi said he and Olaf agreed that the global forums established in the 20th century were inadequate to address the challenges of the 21st century. *—ANI*

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WARNS CRPF SCHOOLS

Pannun offers $1M 'bounty' for intel on Amit Shah's trips

WASHINGTON DC, 25 OCT

Pro-Khalistani terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun announced on Friday a reward of USD 1 million for anyone who can provide information on Union Minister Amit Shah's foreign trips. Pannun also called for the shutdown of CRPF schools in Nagpur, Delhi (Rohini and Dwarka), Sonipat, Pinjore, and Jalandhar from 26 November.

"Shah, who heads India's CRPF, is responsible for hiring mercenaries to assassinate Hardeep Nijjar and is involved in a murder-for-hire plot in New York," said Pannun.

He further said that CRPF officials, from KPS Gill to Vikash Yadav, are responsible for extrajudicial killings of Sikhs, which began in Punjab and are now happening in foreign countries.

Gurpatwant Singh Pannun and Amit Shah **PHOTO: PTI**

Pannun's statement comes days after a blast outside a CRPF school in north Delhi's Rohini on Sunday, for which the banned Khalistan Zindabad Force claimed responsibility. Later that evening, a screenshot from a Telegram channel named "Justice League India" circulated widely on social media, featuring a video of the Rohini blast with a "Khalistan Zindabad" watermark.

The post also included a threatening message, implying possible involvement from a pro-Khalistani group. Senior police officers have noted that the claim made on Telegram is still under verification, and they have contacted Telegram for further information.

On Monday, Pannun issued a warning to passengers against flying on Air India flights from 1-19 November, suggesting an attack could occur during that period. *—Agencies*

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25 FLIGHTS GET HOAX BOMB THREATS ON FRIDAY

NEW DELHI/ MUMBAI, 25 OCT

More than 25 domestic and international flights operated by Indian carriers received bomb threats on Friday, according to sources.

An IndiGo spokesperson on Friday said 7 of its flights, including 6E 87 from Kozhikode to Dammam, got security-related alerts.

The sources in the know said around 7 flights each of IndiGo, Vistara and SpiceJet got the threats while 6 flights of Air India received the threats.

IndiGo's six other flights -- 6E 2099 (Udaipur to Delhi), 6E 11 (Delhi to Istanbul), 6E 58 (Jeddah to Mumbai), 6E 17 (Mumbai to Istanbul), 6E 108 (Hyderabad to Chandigarh) and 6E 133 (Pune to Jodhpur) received the threats.

"Flight 6E 2099, operating from Udaipur to Delhi, received a bomb threat. Following security agency guidelines, the aircraft was redirected to isolation bay before take-off and standard operating procedures were followed. All passengers were safely disembarked," the airline spokesperson said in a statement.

In 12 days, more than 275 flights have received bomb threats. *—PTI*

Gulmarg attack: 2 more jawans die, toll rises to 4

SRINAGAR, 25 OCT

Two soldiers who were critically wounded in Thursday's terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Gulmarg succumbed to their injuries, raising the death toll in the ambush to four.

Two Army porters died on Thursday while another porter and a soldier were injured.

Terrorists attacked a vehicle of the force 6 km from tourist hotspot Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, officials said on Thursday.

They had said the terrorists opened fire on the Army vehicle in the Bota Pathri area in the evening when it was headed for the Nagin post in the Afrawat range.

They had said the soldiers in the vehicle opened retaliatory fire when they came under attack.

PHOTO: PTI

The area is completely dominated by the Army and there were reports recently that a terrorist group had infiltrated during early summer and taken shelter in the higher reaches of the Afrawat range, they said.

Jammu and Kashmir government Friday gave Rs 6 lakh each to the kin of two army porters killed in a terror attack in Baramulla district a day earlier. *—PTI*

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BBMP sets 15 Nov deadline to clear drain encroachments

BENGALURU, 25 OCT

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath has ordered zonal commissioners to conduct surveys and clear all encroachments on rajakaluves (storm-water drains) and lakes under its limits before 15 November. The BBMP chief also warned of strict action if the officials fail to clear encroachments before the deadline.

The order came after a meeting called by the BBMP chief on Friday to discuss the encroachments with tahsildars, zonal commissioners and other officials concerned.

A majority of the rajakaluve-related encroachments have been identified in Mahadevapura, Yelahanka, Dasarahalli and Bommanahalli apart from East Division, according to BBMP's latest figures. There are more than 1,600 encroachments in BBMP limits that are yet to be cleared.

"Apart from this, we are also surveying the number of lakes and rajakaluves for identifying encroachments," the BBMP Chief said. *—Salar News*

EC SEIZES JEWELS WORTH ₹139 CR FROM PUNE TEMPO

PUNE, 25 OCT

A static surveillance team (SST) of the Election Commission on Friday found jewellery worth Rs 139 crore being transported in a logistics service firm's vehicle here.

A city-based jewellers' firm claimed that it was a legitimate consignment.

SSTs have been deployed in the city in view of the 20 November Maharashtra assembly elections.

A tempo belonging to Sequel Global Precious Logistics was intercepted in Sahakarnagar area here, said Smartana Patil, deputy commissioner of police (zone 2).

"Upon inquiry, the team found that the boxes in the vehicle contained jewellery and the vehicle had come from Mumbai....we informed the Income Tax department and election officials about it," she said, adding that the consignment was worth Rs 139 crore.

Amit Modak, CEO of jewellery firm PN Gadgil & Sons, said the jewelry being transported belonged to various jewellery shops in Pune, including cargo of 10 kg belonging to his firm. *—PTI*

K'taka man drives car with cop on bonnet

SHIVAMOGGA, 25 OCT

A traffic police official on duty was dragged for several metres on the bonnet of a car, when he tried to stop it for routine check and verification, police said.

The incident happened near Sahyadri College in this district headquarters town on Thursday, the video of which is now getting widely circulated on social media platforms.

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

In the footage, the cop can be seen clinging to the bonnet of the vehicle.

With a traffic policeman trying to stop the car, the driver is seen initially slowing down, but suddenly accelerating forcing the policeman who was in front of it to jump onto the bonnet. The car driver then drags the policeman who was clinging to the bonnet for several metres, before stopping and then fleeing away, police said. *—PTI*

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'FLAG-BEARER FOR WOMEN'

Padma Shri physicist Rohini Godbole no more

BENGALURU, 25 OCT

Renowned physicist and Padma Shri award winner Professor Rohini M Godbole died on Friday, according to the Centre for High Energy Physics (CHEP), Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru. Godbole was 71.

Godbole, a brilliant researcher and a champion of women in science, joined CHEP as an associate professor in 1995 and has been a professor since 1998. Post her superannuation on 31 July, 2021, she became an honorary professor.

Her countless students and colleagues have taken to 'X' to pay tribute to her.

Rohini Godbole **PHOTO: PTI**

Joydeep Chakraborty, Professor of Theoretical Physics at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur posted on 'X': "It's a huge loss not only for the HEP community but also for physics in general... She will be remembered as a great physicist and a teacher who motivated younger people to pursue careers in research."

K Vijaya Raghavan, Developmental biologist at the National Centre for Biological Sciences, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research said on 'X' that she was full of energy and drive. "She was a physicist, flag-bearer for women in science, a public citizen and a friend to many. She will be missed and is irreplaceable," his post read. According to her colleague at IISc, Arindam Ghosh, Godbole was much more than a renowned scientist. "She was a leader, and a strong advocate of women in science. She was a friend who will be missed," he posted on 'X'. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

City realtor held for stealing cash, gold from parked car

BENGALURU, 25 OCT

A realtor was arrested for allegedly stealing cash and gold from a parked car in Banaswadi. Police recovered Rs 2 lakh in cash, 144 grams of gold ornaments and the accused's car, collectively valued at Rs 13.75 lakh.

Bengaluru Police Commissioner B Dayananda on Friday said the arrest was made following a complaint filed by a Hennur resident on 19 September regarding the theft of her valuables. The complainant said she had taken her husband to a hospital in Banaswadi for treatment. She parked her car on a road near the hospital. When she returned, she found the car door unlocked and her bag containing Rs 2 lakh in cash and gold jewellery missing. Police tracked down the accused on 29 September near Ejipura Main Road. The accused used to work as a real-estate agent but suffering a loss, he began stealing valuables from vehicles. *—Salar News*

Foreigner arrested with MDMA worth Rs 1.5 crore

BENGALURU, 25 OCT

The anti-narcotics wing of Central Crime Branch nabbed an African national for allegedly selling banned MDMA crystals near New Mico Layout in City. Police seized 1.03kg of MDMA valued at Rs 1.5 crore, a mobile phone, and a weighing machine from his two-wheeler and also impounded the vehicle, Bengaluru Police Commissioner B Dayananda said on Friday. Police have detected a case registered against the accused by Mumbai police in 2018. Currently, the accused has been placed under judicial custody and a probe is on, the police commissioner said. *—Salar News*

City police's monthly public interaction today

BENGALURU, 25 OCT

Bengaluru police will conduct this month's Masika Janasamparka Divasa, a meeting to address the grievances of the public, will be held in Sanjay Nagar from 12pm to 1pm on Saturday, City Police Commissioner B Dayananda said. The City police chief said he will participate in the interaction at Urvi Convention Centre along with Deputy Commissioner of Police, North Division, Saidulu Adavath. "The public can visit the police station and share law and order problems in their areas with inspectors and senior police officers who will be present at the station," the police commissioner said. *—Salar News*

Video reveals reckless driving on Hebbal flyover

BENGALURU, 25 OCT

A group of vehicles, including a school bus, drove the wrong way of Hebbal flyover in Bengaluru and a video of the dangerous act surfaced online on Thursday. Hebbal Traffic police said they would take the necessary action. The user who shared the video on X wrote, "Brazen wrong side driving to access Hebbal flyover blocking all traffic. Kindly take action on video evidence." The person tagged Bengaluru police to take action against the violators. The user said, "Imagine the anguish of parents to see a school bus being driven with such negligence. Today it is someone else's child but tomorrow it could be yours." Commuters expressed frustration over the blatant disregard for traffic rules, noting that this behaviour contributes to citywide congestion. One user pointed out that people often ignore the rules when no officers are around, emphasising that true character shows when one thinks no one is watching. *—Salar News*

Minimum wages for unorganised sector workers to be raised

MYSURU, 25 OCT

Department of Labour will revise the minimum wages for workers employed in unorganised sector from the existing Rs 14,000 per month, Labour Commissioner HN Gopalakrishna said on Friday.

As the minimum wages have not been revised for the last five years, the department will revise the price considering all aspects, including the increase in the cost of living, the rise in prices of essential commodities, he said.

The commissioner was speaking at a one-day workshop on labour laws and its implementation in the State organised by the department, District Administration, Zilla Panchayat and District Legal Services Authority at Vidyaranyapuram in the city.

Though labour organisations are demanding a minimum wage of Rs 35,000 per month, the department will not cede to that and fix an appropriate minimum wage, he said.

- Minimum wages have not been revised for the last five years.

The commissioner also said more than 20,000 institutions are registered with the Labour Department.

There are 65 lakh organised sector workers and 1.80 crore unorganised sector workers.

The commissioner said his department is merging 25 labour-related laws into four laws and it will be completed next year.

To help the construction workers, the department has extended all security benefits, implemented seven projects for the welfare of construction workers. Social security benefits up to Rs 57 crore were distributed to more than 29 lakh construction workers last year, he said.

He appealed to all unorganised sector workers to register their names with E Shram portal to receive social security benefits provided by Central and State governments. So far, nearly 97 lakh from across the state were registered in this portal. *—Salar News*

BBMP'S MISSION DEMOLITION

BBMP demolishes unsafe & tilted buildings

BENGALURU, 25 OCT

A 25-year-old building that was deemed unsafe and constructed adjoining a drain at Mahalakshmi Layout in Kamalanagar was razed by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) officials on Friday morning.

The building tilted on Thursday night after water seepage damaged the foundation walls, shocking the residents and the neighbours in the area. The residents alerted the BBMP officials who helped them recover the belongings from the building. Later, the officials inspected the damaged walls of the building and slated it for demolition.

Manjunath, who lived in the building for almost 10 years, said the three-storey building housed five families. "We feared for our lives when the building tilted on Thursday. We carried whatever valuables we could save with us and evacuated the building immediately," he said.

Meanwhile, temporary accommodation was arranged for the rescued families. While one family is staying at Ambedkar Bhavan, another has been accommodated at a temple with food and water. Three families have shifted to their relatives' houses.

Meanwhile, BBMP also demolished a six-storey newly-constructed building at Nanjappa Garden in Horamavu due to damages in the structure.

Jolted into action after the death of nine people in the building collapse at Babusapalya, the BBMP officials have started surveying and taking action on buildings in the City limits that have either been illegally constructed or are violating approved building plans. Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has ordered a ban on constructing buildings within 50 feet of rajakaluves. *—Salar News*

BBMP demolishes a two-storey building in Kamalanagar, Bengaluru, on Friday. The owner, visibly distraught, watches as the structures is torn down

PHOTO: MOAHMMED ASAD

Building collapse: 1 more body recovered; death toll now 9

Bengaluru, 25 Oct

One more body was recovered on Friday during a search and rescue operation after an under-construction building collapsed at Babusapalya here, taking the death toll to nine, police said. Teams from the fire and emergency department, National Disaster Response Force and State Disaster Response Force have been pressed into rescue operations since the incident occurred during heavy downpour on Tuesday, they said. "One more body has been recovered during the search operation. The deceased has been identified as Elumalai," a senior police officer said. *—PTI*

101 get lifer for atrocities against Dalits

KOPPAL, 25 OCT

As many as 101 people were sentenced to life imprisonment by a court in Koppal district for setting on fire the hutments of the Dalit community.

The accused were found guilty recently and the quantum of punishment was pronounced by the court on Thursday.

The case is related to caste-based violence in Marakumbi village in Gangavathi Taluk on August 28, 2014.

The accused had set on fire the dwellings belonging to the downtrodden community.

The clash broke out over Dalits being denied entry into the barber shop and eateries. The incident led to widespread protests in several parts of the state.

According to the prosecution, out of 117 accused, 16 died during the course of trial. *—PTI*

BOMMAI'S SON FILES NOMINATION FOR SHIGGAON

HAVERI, 25 OCT

BJP candidate and former chief minister Basavaraj Bommai's son Bharath Bommai and Congress leader Yasir Ahmed Khan Pathan on Friday filed their nominations for the 13 November Assembly byelection in Shiggaon in this district.

Congress leader Syed Ajjampeer Khadri also submitted his papers. Congress sources said senior party leaders including Minister BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan tried to dissuade Khadri from entering the fray but he remained firm.

Deputy Chief Minister and State Congress chief D K Shivakumar, however, ruled out any rebellion in the Congress and said Khadri would withdraw his nomination papers.

The Shiggaon seat fell vacant following Basavaraj's resignation from the Assembly after his victory in the Lok Sabha election in May this year.

In a show of strength, the Opposition BJP took out a massive rally before Bharath filed his papers.

Addressing people, BS Yediyurappa, who is BJP's parliamentary board member, said his party would win all the three seats in the State, where bypolls would be held.

He added that the victory was "definite" because the SC/ST and backward communities are supporting the BJP.

Seeking support for Bharath, Basavaraj said he has "ordered" his son to help and protect every section of the society. *—PTI*

NDA candidate for Channapatna Nikhil Kumaraswamy along with his wife offers prayers at a temple, in Channapatna with his dad HD Kumaraswamy and grandfather Deve Gowda in Channapatna on Friday

PHOTO: SALAR

Nikhil files nomination from Channapatna

BENGALURU, 25 OCT

JD(S) leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy on Friday filed his nomination for the 13 November Assembly bypolls from Channapatna, a seat vacated by his father and Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy after being elected to Lok Sabha, amid a show of strength along with alliance partner BJP.

The actor-turned-politician and NDA nominee was accompanied by wife Revathi, father Kumaraswamy, and BJP leaders— former Chief Minister DV Sadananda Gowda and Shivamogga MP B Y Raghavendra.

Earlier, the 36-year-old along with family members including his grandfather JD(S) patriarch and former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda visited a temple here.

Nikhil is pitted against Congress' P Yogeeshwara, a five-time Channapatna MLA, former Minister and a political heavyweight in the constituency, who switched sides from the BJP on Monday.

Kumaraswamy had won the Channapatna seat in the 2023 Assembly elections polling 96,592 votes against Yogeeshwara (then in BJP), who got 80,677 votes.

It is said that Kumaraswamy was in a dilemma, as Nikhil was not keen on contesting but buckled under pressure from party workers. Nikhil had said he was in favour of the party fielding a local JD(S) worker or a leader as candidate. *—PTI*

Lokayukta police question CM's wife in MUDA case

MYSURU, 25 OCT

The Lokayukta police on Friday questioned Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi BM in the MUDA site allotment case, Lokayukta sources said.

She arrived at the office along with her friend, gave evidence to Lokayukta SP T J Udesha.

Parvathi is the accused number 2 in this case.

"Parvathi was summoned today and the questioning went on for more than two hours," a Lokayukta official said. Lokayukta police on September 27 registered an FIR against Siddaramaiah, his wife, brother-in-law Mallikarjuna Swamy, Devaraju— from whom Mallikarjuna Swamy purchased land and gifted it to her— and others, following a Special Court order on 25 September.

The order of the Special Court came a day after the High Court upheld the sanction granted by the Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot to conduct an investigation against Siddaramaiah. ED has also registered an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR), equivalent to an FIR by police, against the Chief Minister. *—PTI*

Woman assaults cop in Indiranagar

BENGALURU, 25 OCT

A woman was arrested for allegedly assaulting an on-duty traffic police official near ESI Junction in Indiranagar here on Friday. The woman, who may have a history of mental health issues, overreacted after she was stopped by a policeman for violating a traffic rule, Indiranagar police said.

The matter came to light after videos of the assault in full public view went viral on social media. In the video, the woman, Sonam, was seen trying to stomp on the feet of a traffic police officer and pulling off his body-worn camera. She was also heard abusing and shouting that she would ensure that all police officers present at the scene would lose their jobs. Several police officers were seen trying to calm her down. The video was recorded by a passer-by who shared it on social media. *—Salar News*

In the video, the woman, Sonam, was seen trying to stomp on the feet of a traffic police officer

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

Mysuru residents protest over lack of drinking water

MYSURU, 25 OCT

Hundreds of residents from Mysuru's Roopa Nagar and Ravishankara Nagar gathered outside the Bogadi Town Panchayat office on Wednesday, demanding urgent action to address their pressing needs for drinking water and underground drainage (UGD) facilities.

The protesters voiced their frustrations, chanting slogans against the Panchayat's administrative officers, whom they accused of neglecting their community's basic requirements despite numerous pleas and previous protests. *—Salar News*

CAUGHT ON CCTV

Men abduct 2 minors from Belagavi home

BELAGAVI, 25 OCT

Two children of a businessman were allegedly kidnapped from their residence in Athani in Belagavi, police said on Friday.

A CCTV footage of the incident showed two men entering the house and running away with them - a four-year-old girl and a three-year-old boy, they said.

Both the children have been secured and handed over to their parents while the three men involved in the alleged kidnapping have been arrested, police said.

According to police, the incident took place on Thursday after the two kids had just returned from school and were playing inside the living room of the house. At the time, only their grandmother was at home.

A CCTV footage of the incident showed two men entering the house and running away with the children

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

The third accused was waiting with a car a few metres away from the house. The two men pushed the children inside the vehicle and sped away.

The police managed to trace the route of the suspects with the help of CCTV footage and technical surveillance, and immediately alerted their counterparts in the neighbouring districts, a senior police official said.

"The police team chased the vehicle in which the kidnapped children were taken away by the accused and intercepted the vehicle near Kohalli in district at around 4.25 am on Friday," he said.

"The three accused were arrested," the official said.

During interrogation, one of the accused revealed that he had invested in the trading platform of the businessman and incurred heavy losses. When he asked the businessman over Rs 1 crore following this, he refused to pay him and, so, he decided to kidnap the children, he said. *—PTI*

Board faces flak for hiking Mysore Palace ticket prices

MYSURU, 25 OCT

PHOTO: PIXABAY

The Mysore Palace Board's decision to increase entry ticket prices, particularly for foreign tourists, sparked backlash from the local tourism and hospitality sectors.

Beginning this Friday, the entry fee for foreign visitors soared from Rs 100 to Rs 1,000— a tenfold increase that has alarmed stakeholders in Mysuru's tourism industry. The Mysuru District Hotel Owners Association has voiced its concerns, arguing that such a steep price hike will deter foreign visitors, a demographic that has already been declining in recent years.

M Narayangowda, President of the association, stated that they have formally appealed to the district administration and the Mysore Palace Board to reconsider the new pricing structure, especially for foreign tourists and students visiting the iconic Amba Vilas Palace.

Under the new pricing scheme, adult tickets have increased from Rs 100 to Rs 120, while tickets for children aged 10 to 18 have risen from Rs 50 to Rs 70. Children under 10 continue to enter for free, and educational tours for students now cost Rs 50, up from Rs 30.

While the Palace Board has introduced luggage counters, slipper stands, and toilet facilities, industry leaders argue that the increased ticket prices are unjustified. *—Salar News*

Raut gets bail in defamation case by BJP leader's wife

MUMBAI, 25 OCT

A sessions court here on Friday granted bail to Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut as he challenged his conviction in a defamation case filed by BJP leader Kirit Somaiya's wife Medha Somaiya. Raut has filed a revision application in the sessions court against his conviction and the 15-day jail sentence awarded by a magistrate's court. He appeared before the court on Friday and sought bail. The court granted him bail in the sum of Rs 50,000. Judicial Magistrate (First Class) Aarti Kulkarni on 26 September held Raut guilty of defamation under Indian Penal Code section 500. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 25,000 on him. *—PTI*

DMK sues Palaniswami, seeks ₹1cr in damages

CHENNAI, 25 OCT

The ruling DMK in Tamil Nadu on Friday approached the Madras High Court, seeking Rs one crore in damages from AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami for making alleged defamatory allegations against the party online. Justice RMT Teekaa Raman before whom the suit filed by DMK represented by its organisation secretary RS Bharathi came up, posted to next week, further hearing of the case. Bharathi said the the post alleged increased crime rate under the DMK and that the party had caused embarrassment due to drug trafficking. Palaniswami via the post had called upon the public to attend a human chain demonstration against the supposed misadministration of the governance of the state by DMK, he added. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Murmu bats for technology in medical sector

RAIPUR, 25 OCT

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday stressed the need for modern technologies in the medical sector for the welfare of people living in remote areas of the country, citing the impact of such advancements on human lives. Speaking at the second convocation function of All India Institute of Medical Sciences Raipur in Chhattisgarh, she said medical professionals have immense responsibilities to deliver as their decisions are linked to saving lives. She also said medical professionals will play a decisive role in realising the dream of 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047. She said several steps have been taken to provide universal healthcare. *—PTI*

Maoist killed in encounter in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR, 25 OCT

A Maoist was killed in an exchange of fire with security forces in Budanai reserve forest area of Odisha's Kandhamal district on Friday, police said. On receipt of an intelligence input, an operation was launched in the forest area on 23 October and it continued till Friday. During the operation, an exchange of fire between the SOG and Naxals erupted this morning at around 9am on Friday. Following the encounter by elite Special Operation Group, the security personnel searched the area and recovered the body of a Maoist cadre along with one AK-47 rifle, the police said. Preliminary inquiry revealed that the deceased was a senior ranked cadre of CPI(Maoist) belonging to the Kandhamal-Kalahandi-Boudh-Nayagarh Division of the outfit, the police said. Further search of the area and operation is under progress, they said. Director General of Police Y B Khurania has congratulated Kandhamal police, intelligence directorate and operational headquarters for the achievement. *—PTI*

Baba's son joins NCP, named in 2nd list

Zeeshan Siddique was suspended from Congress for cross-voting

MUMBAI, 25 OCT

The Ajit Pawar-led NCP on Friday released its second list, comprising seven candidates including MLA Zeeshan Siddique and two former BJP MPs, for the upcoming Maharashtra Assembly elections.

Zeeshan Siddique, whose father and NCP leader Baba Siddique was shot dead earlier this month, will contest from Bandra East, which he had won in 2019 on a Congress ticket. He also joined the NCP.

The legislator on Thursday criticised the decision of the Shiv Sena (UBT), a partner of Congress in the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), to field Varun Sardesai in his constituency for the 20 November polls, saying staying together was never in their nature.

Zeeshan had been suspended from Congress for cross-voting in the recent legislative council elections. His father and Congress veteran Baba Siddique had crossed over to the NCP, a constituent of the ruling Mahayuti coalition, earlier this year. Former BJP MP Pratap Chikhalikar has been nominated from Loha.

BJP ex-MP Sanjay Kaka Patil, who unsuccessfully contested from Sangli in the general elections, has been given an NCP ticket. Sanjay Kaka Patil will face off with NCP (SP) candidate Rohit Patil, son of late NCP leader RR Patil, in Tasgaon-Kavathe Mahankal constituency in Sangli district. Nishikant Patil will take on NCP (SP) state president Jayant Patil in Islampur, while Sana Malik, daughter of former minister Nawab Malik, has been nominated from Anushakti Nagar in Mumbai.

Zeeshan Siddique with Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar in Mumbai on Friday *PHOTO: PTI*

> **Mahayuti alliance will return to power with a thumping majority on the basis of our development work and welfare initiatives**
>
> -Eknath Shinde, Maharashtra CM

NCP has given the ticket to Sunil Tingre from Wadgaon Sheri in Pune.

It has picked Dnyaneshwar Katke from Shrirur. Until recently, Katke was the Pune district chief of the Uddhav Thackeray-led NCP (SP). Earlier, NCP had released its first list featuring 38 candidates. NCP, BJP and Chief Minister Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena are the major constituents of ruling Mahayuti coalition in the state. *—PTI*

Cong slams Mahayuti's 'bluff and rule' approach

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

The Congress on Friday alleged that the Mahayuti government's "steadfast refusal" to conduct a caste survey had a real consequence for a number of Maharashtra's traditionally disadvantaged communities and claimed that it adopted a "bluff and rule" strategy of repeatedly delaying action on social justice.

Congress General Secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh also asserted that the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) would return to power and restore the ideals of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Chhatrapati Shahuji Maharaj, Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar, Annabhau Sathe, and Jyotiba Phule.

"The non-biological prime minister and the Mahayuti government's steadfast refusal to conduct a caste census has had real consequence for a number of Maharashtra's traditionally disadvantaged communities," he alleged.

Jairam Ramesh *PHOTO: PTI*

Several communities in Maharashtra have been demanding a caste survey and enhanced reservation in government jobs and academic institutions for years, Ramesh said in a post on X. Chief Minister Eknath Shinde of the Mahayuti alliance has repeatedly made vague commitments about studying other states' methodologies to address their demands for reservation but no meaningful progress has been made, Ramesh said. Congress has called for a nationwide caste survey and removal of the 50 per cent ceiling on reservation for SCs, STs, and other backwardClasses, he said. *—PTI*

Jharkhand CM Hemant with ex-BJP MLA Soren Louis Marandi *PHOTO: PTI*

JMM releases 5th list, fields ex-BJP MLA from Jama

RANCHI, 25 OCT

The ruling Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) on Friday released its fifth list for the assembly polls, announcing that former BJP legislator Lois Marandi as its nominee from the Jama seat.

The list contained only the name of Marandi who defected from the BJP and joined the JMM on 22 October.

Lois Marandi, a former BJP MLA, had in 2014 defeated Chief Minister Hemant Soren by a margin of 5,262 votes from Dumka. JMM announced a total of 43 candidates for the elections to the 81-seat assembly. The Assembly elections will take place in two phases on 13 and 20 November. Counting will be held on 23 November. *—PTI*

India, China start troop withdrawal

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

India and China have begun troop disengagement at the two friction points at Demchok and Depsang Plains in eastern Ladakh and this process is likely to get completed by October 28-29, Army sources said on Friday.

The process follows an agreement firmed up between the two countries on patrolling and disengagement of troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, a major breakthrough to end the over four-year standoff.

Sources said that patrolling will begin at the two friction points once the disengagement is done and both sides will move their respective troops and dismantle temporary structures.

Eventually, they added, the patrolling status is expected to move back to pre-April 2020 level.

The agreement framework was first agreed upon at the diplomatic level and then military-level talks took place, the army sources said, adding the nitty-gritty of agreement was worked in Corps Commander-level talks.

The ties between the two Asian giants had nosedived following a fierce clash in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in decades.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on 21 October said in Delhi that the agreement was finalised following negotiations over the past several weeks and that it would lead to a resolution of the issues that arose in 2020.

On 23 October, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and China President Xi Jinping endorsed the agreement on patrolling and disengagement along the LAC in eastern Ladakh during their bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan in Russia. *—PTI*

Canada resolved 5 of 26 terrorist extraditions

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

Of the 26 requests sent to Canada for extraditing Khalistani terrorists, Ottawa has resolved only five and the rest remain in limbo, India's top envoy to that country has said, calling it the result of "inaction".

The five men are in the process of being extradited, High Commissioner Sanjay Verma said in an interview this week. He said he is not at liberty to disclose the name or give details.

The interview took place on Wednesday, a couple of days after his return to New Delhi. India recalled him and five other Indian diplomats after they were named "person of interest" in a Canadian investigation into the 2023 killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a Khalistani terrorist who was a Canadian citizen.

Relations between the two countries have plunged to their lowest level ever over the issue of Canada's tacit support for Khalistani extremists among the large Sikh-Canadian population of about 8 lakhs. New Delhi accuses Ottawa of doing next to nothing to stop the activities of Khalistani supporters who seek to undermine territorial integrity of India. Recently, the Ministry of External Affairs said the 26 extradition requests are for people who have been charged in India with terror and related crimes. India has also sought "provisional arrest" of several of the accused, which remains pending with Canada, , under the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty. *—PTI*

7 criminals of Lawrence and Anmol Bishnoi gang after their arrest by the Special Cell of the Delhi Police f in New Delhi, Friday *PHOTO: PTI*

7 Bishnoi gang shooters arrested by Delhi Police

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

In a crackdown on the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, the Delhi Police Special Cell has arrested at least seven suspected shooters who were planning to target someone in Rajasthan, officials here said on Friday.

The arrests come days after the sensational murder of NCP leader and former Maharashtra minister Baba Siddique in Mumbai on 12 October.

The Bishnoi gang has claimed responsibility for the murder. Also, the NIA has announced a reward of Rs 10 lakh for information leading to the arrest of Anmol Bishnoi, the younger brother of jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi.

Meanwhile, Mumbai court extended till 26 October the police remand of nine accused in the Baba Siddique murder case. *—PTI*

Ideal time for German investment in India: PM

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Hyderabad House, in New Delhi, on Friday *PHOTO: PTI*

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

Inviting German businesses to invest in the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said there is no better place for investment than India and this is the right time to join the country's growth story.

Addressing the 18th Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business 2024 here, he emphasised that the time was 'right' for foreign investors to participate in India's growth story, join 'make in India' initiative and 'make for the world'.

He also said the confidence that Germany has expressed in India's skilled manpower is amazing as the European nation has decided to increase visas for the skilled Indian workforce from 20,000 to 90,000 per year and this will give a further push to the economic growth of Germany.

"This is the right time to join India's growth story... India becoming a global trade and manufacturing hub," Modi said, adding, today India stands on strong pillars of democracy, demography, demand and data.

He further said that India is doing record investments in roads, railways, airports and ports and the Indo-Pacific region is very important for the future of the world.

The conference was held on Friday after a gap of 12 years. *—PTI*

YS Sharmila *PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

Jagan does not own assets, only guardian: Sharmila

AMARAVATI, 25 OCT

Estranged YSRCP chief Jagan Mohan Reddy's sister YS Sharmila on Friday said that all the businesses which were established when former chief minister and her father YS Rajasekhara Reddy was alive, are of family assets and Jagan is just a "guardian" of them.

She said that her late father Reddy's intention was that Jagan should divide all the businesses equally among the four grandchildren - two each of Jagan and Sharmila.

She said she received Rs 200 crore during the past 10 years towards her family share as dividends from various companies which established the fact that all four grandchildren of Rajasekhara Reddy would get equal portions. She said she has been demanding a due share in the properties as their late father desired that all the grandchildren should get equal pie. She claimed that Jagan always opposed her entry into politics. *— PTI*

ALL SET FOR POLLS

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and BJP Nagpur South-West candidate Devendra Fadnavis with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari; Former Jharkhand CM and BJP Saraikela candidate Champai Soren file their papers on Friday. The nomination process for bypolls to 47 seats across 13 states concluded on Friday. Voting is set for 13 November in nine seats in Uttar Pradesh, seven in Rajasthan, six in West Bengal, five in Assam, four each in Bihar and Punjab, three in Karnataka, two each in Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, and Sikkim, and one each in Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, and Meghalaya *PHOTO: PTI*

AMID TERROR ATTACKS

Choppers, drones used in J&K search ops

SRINAGAR, 25 OCT

Security forces on Friday pressed drones and helicopters into service as a massive search operation was launched along the Line of Control (LoC) in Gulmarg sector of Jammu and Kashmir where a terror attack left four people, including two soldiers, dead, officials said.

The combing and search operation was launched along the LoC and the area near the attack site in the morning. The area of the search operation was widened later towards the hinterland as well, the officials said.

The officials said helicopters and drones were pressed into the service to help the forces, who are also using human and technical intelligence inputs to aid the search operation which has been launched to trace and neutralise the terrorists behind the attack.

Security personnel keep vigil on the Gulmarg-Botapathri road during a search operation on Friday *PHOTO: PTI*

Senior officers of the police and Army are overseeing the operation.

Security forces have sealed the routes around the site of the attack. Authorities had also temporarily shut the Gondola ropeway service at the resort town of Gulmarg as a precautionary measure in the morning. The service was resumed later after security assessments and measures were completed.

Two soldiers and two Army porters were killed in the attack on Thursday while another porter and a soldier were injured. Terrorists attacked a vehicle of the force six km from the tourist hotspot Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. *—PTI*

CPI(M) threatens Guv with legal action over VC row

THRISSUR, 25 OCT

Kerala's ruling CPI(M) said on Friday that legal action will be initiated against Governor Arif Mohammed Khan for his "anti-democratic decision" to reappoint Mohanan Kunnummal as Vice-Chancellor of the Kerala University of Health Sciences (KUHS).

Strongly criticising Khan, also the chancellor of the varsity, CPI(M) state secretary M V Govindan said Kunnummal's reappointment occurred without any discussions.

The party said the Governor did not adhere to the legal obligation or democratic decorum that mandates consultation with the state government when making appointments in state universities funded by the government.

CM accuses Oppn of misrepresenting Malappuram dist

Kicking off his campaign for Left candidates contesting the bypolls in Kerala, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Friday hit out at BJP and Congress-led UDF, alleging that the Sangh Parivar is misrepresenting Malappuram district, with the grand old party supporting this narrative.

The Opposition Congress-led UDF had targeted Vijayan over his Malappuram remarks, accusing him of unfairly portraying the Muslim-majority district, prompting demands for an apology and clarification. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Google Doodle pays tribute to KK on debut anniversary

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

Google on Friday celebrated iconic playback singer Krishnakumar Kunnath, popularly known as KK, on the anniversary of his debut in Hindi cinema with a special Doodle dedicated to the beloved musician. According to Google, the Doodle marks his debut as a playback singer in 1996 with the song 'Chhod Aaye Hum', which was featured in the Gulzar-directed film 'Maachis'. Born on 23 August, 1968, in Delhi, KK rose to prominence with songs like 'Pal' and 'Yaaron', which became anthems of love and friendship. KK, regarded as one of the top singers, had not taken a formal training in music but emerged as one of the most popular singers of the late 90s and 2000s right after his debut. *—PTI*

HC orders Customs to release artwork of Souza, Padamsee

MUMBAI, 25 OCT

Bombay High Court on Friday ordered the Customs Department to release the artwork by renowned artists FN Souza and Akbar Padamsee seized last year on the ground of being "obscene material". A division bench quashed a July 2024 order passed by the Assistant Commissioner of Mumbai Customs confiscating the artwork, and observed that the Customs officials, having no understanding of or expertise in the field of art, failed to differentiate between a work of art and obscenity. The court said the seized artwork shall be released immediately and not later than two weeks to the petitioner. In April last year, the Mumbai Customs seized a consignment of seven artworks, including a folio of four erotic drawings comprising one called "Lovers" by Souza, citing obscenity. *—PTI*

CRPF jawan shoots himself dead in Chhattisgarh

BIJAPUR, 25 OCT

A head constable of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) died after he allegedly shot himself with his service weapon in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, police said on Friday. The incident took place on Thursday at the headquarters of CRPF's 199th battalion in Bhairamgarh. Head Constable Pavan Kumar turned his AK-47 rifle on himself when he was posted on a watch tower. No suicide note was found on Kumar and an investigation is underway to ascertain what prompted him to take the extreme step, he added. This is the seventh suicide by a trooper in the last five months in the state. CRPF, BSF and SSB are deployed in the state for anti-Naxalite operations. *—PTI*

R'than govt exam cancelled due to cheating via devices

JAIPUR, 25 OCT

The Rajasthan Public Service Commission (RPSC) cancelled a competitive examination for recruitment to 111 senior posts of the Local Self Government Department following breach of confidentiality during the conduct of the test. In the Revenue Officer Grade II and Executive Officer Class-IV Competitive Examination, 2022 conducted by the Commission on 24 May last year, 1,96,483 candidates had appeared for 111 posts. Of them, a total of 311 candidates were included after the exam in the list issued for eligibility check and document verification. There were incidents of cheating at examination centres at Bikaner and three FIRs were registered there on the day of the examination. The Commission also re-examined the documents of several candidates from 2 to 8 August. *—PTI*

Rains batter Odisha, WB as Dana completes landfall

Kolkata Municipal Corporation, SSKM Hospital sees flooding

BHUBANESWAR/ KOLKATA, 25 OCT

Heavy rain packed with gusty winds lashed several areas of Odisha, West Bengal and Jharkhand on Friday under the impact of severe cyclonic storm Dana that made landfall between Dhamra and Bhitarkanika in the state.

In various parts of Bengal's Mandarmani in Purba Medinipur and Gosaba in South 24 Parganas district, waterlogging has been reported, compounding the misery of the affected residents.

The full extent of the damage is still being assessed, but initial reports suggested that the storm brought heavy rains, which continued till Friday, causing inundation in low-lying areas.

Train services on the south section of the Sealdah Division under the Eastern Railway also restarted at 10 am after scheduled cancellations due to the cyclone, they said.

The East Coast Railway (ECoR) said trains started running as per schedule, barring those cancelled earlier in its jurisdiction.

The ECoR cancelled around 203 trains as a precautionary measure for the cyclone Dana.

Trains coming from Visakhapatnam, Howrah and Kharagpur to Bhubaneswar have started running, an ECoR official said. Large parts of Kolkata faced severe waterlogging during the morning hours of Friday as cyclone Dana brought torrential rain in its aftermath, inundating areas across the city. Kolkata received over 100 mm of rainfall till 11.30 am on Friday over the previous 24 hours. Knee-deep water at several thoroughfares in south and central parts of the city hampered traffic movement in Bhawanipur, New Market, Hazra, Dharmatala, and Behala areas. Reports of waterlogging were also received from Thanthania Kalibari, Mahatma Gandhi Road, VIP Road, Park Circus, Dum Dum and parts of New Town in the northern and eastern parts of the city. Significant flooding was also seen inside the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) headquarters in Esplanade area, while patients, staff and health workers were found wading through ankle-deep water at SSKM Hospital, one of the state's primary referral hospitals, causing major inconvenience to visitors and triggering apprehensions of spread of water-borne infections. *—PTI*

People wade through a waterlogged road during rain in the aftermath of Cyclone Dana, in Kolkata, on Friday PHOTO: PTI

A rickshaw puller carrying a passenger wades through a waterlogged road following heavy rainfall as an effect of the 'Dana' cyclone, in Kolkata on Friday. PHOTOS: ANI

Odisha Fire and Emergency Service personnel clear a fallen trees, in Bhadrak, Odisha

Stranded passengers wait in a queue at Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport as flight operations resume in Kolkata

ORANGE ALERT IN 5 DISTRICTS AS RAINS LASH KERALA

T'PURAM, 25 OCT

Heavy rains lashed several parts of Kerala on Friday disrupting normal life by causing waterlogging of roads and traffic jams, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) sounding an orange alert in five districts of the state.

The IMD issued an orange alert for the day in Thiruvananthapuram, Kottayam, Ernakulam, Idukki and Thrissur districts. It also issued a yellow alert in seven other districts of the state.

An orange alert means very heavy rain (6 cm to 20 cm). A yellow alert means heavy rainfall between 6 and 11 cm.

The IMD also predicted thunderstorms with heavy rainfall and gusty winds at one or two places in Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts.

It also predicted thunderstorms with moderate rainfall and gusty winds in some parts of Pathanamthitta and Alappuzha districts. *—PTI*

ALL ACCUSED GET BAIL

SC grants bail to bizman Dhall in excise policy case

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

The Supreme Court on Friday granted bail to businessman Amandeep Singh Dhall in a corruption case linked to the alleged excise policy scam noting he had been in jail for over a year and the trial was unlikely to conclude soon.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan noted there were about 300 witnesses to be examined by the CBI and the trial in the case was yet to commence.

The bench told the CBI lawyer the focus of the agency must be on conviction.

Dhal moved the apex court challenging the Delhi High Court's 4 June verdict rejecting his bail plea.

CBI had arrested Dhall in April, 2023. He is among the other key accused people—AAP Convenor Arvind Kejriwal, BRS leader K Kavitha, AAP's Manish Sisodia, AAP MP Sanjay Singh, AAP's ex-communication in-charge Vijay Nair, Businessmen Abhishek Boinpally and Arun Pillai and liquor businessman Sameer Mahendru—to have been granted bail in the case.

Raghav Magunta Reddy, son of YSRCP LS MP Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy, businessmen Dinesh Arora and P Sarath Chandra Reddy had turned approver in the case. *—PTI*

Amandeep Singh Dhall PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

RAZING: SC SAYS NO STATUS QUO AGAINST GUJARAT

Supreme Court declined to pass a status quo order on a demolition drive in Gujarat by which Islamic structures and houses of Muslims were allegedly illegally demolished in the Gir Somnath.

Advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Muslims, said the properties were on the Waqf land and the government be directed not to create any third-party rights.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for Gujarat, said it is a government land.

The top court was hearing a contempt petition against Gujarat authorities for allegedly illegally demolishing residential and religious structures despite an interim stay. *—PTI*

Expeditiously hear Sharjeel's bail plea: SC to HC

Supreme Court told Delhi High Court to expeditiously hear the bail plea of student activist Sharjeel Imam in an Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) case related to 2020 Delhi riots.

The bench said it was not inclined to entertain the plea, which sought bail under Article 32.

Imam's counsel said the bail plea had been pending since 2022.

J'khand ex-CM's plea for stay on conviction junked

Supreme Court on Friday dismissed a plea of former Jharkhand chief minister Madhu Koda, seeking a stay on his conviction in a coal scam case, to enable him to contest the Assembly polls.

The bench refused to interfere with the 18 October order of the Delhi High Court refusing the stay on his conviction, which happened in 2017.

SC junks CBI plea seeking LoC against Rhea Chakraborty

In a relief to actor Rhea Chakraborty and her family, Supreme Court upheld Bombay High Court's decision to cancel CBI's lookout circular (LoC) issued against them following Sushant Singh Rajput's death. The Bench slammed the CBI, state of Maharashtra and Bureau of Immigration for challenging the Bombay High Court's decision just because the accused are from a high-profile background. A bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan called the petition was "frivolous". *—PTI*

Rhea Chakraborty PHOTO: PTI

Punjab ryots protests over 'tardy' paddy purchase

The protest led to traffic disruptions in many places PHOTO: PTI

LUDHIANA/ KAPURTHALA, 25 OCT

Farmers under the banner of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) on Friday blocked roads at many places in Punjab to protest against the "tardy" paddy procurement and lifting.

The protest led to traffic disruptions and inconvenienced commuters at many places.

In Ludhiana, farmers staged dharnas on roads at several places, including Samrala, Khanna, Doraha, Machhiwara, Jagraon, Mullanpur and Raikot.

SKM leader Balbir Singh Rajewal said, "Both the AAP government of Punjab and the BJP-led central government are equally responsible for this mess". Meanwhile, the indefinite protest by farmers under the banner of Bharti Kisan Union (Doaba) in Phagwara entered the fifth day on Friday.

Notably, paddy lifting from mandis in Punjab has been hit after the state rice millers refused to mill the paddy till their demands were met. *—PTI*

MP woman picnicking with hubby gangraped

REWA, 25 OCT

A newly married woman on an outing with her husband was allegedly raped by five men in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district following which police have rounded up over 100 people, an official said on Friday.

The alleged gangrape was committed on Monday at a picnic spot in Gurh tehsil, police said.

" She and her husband are in the age group of 19-20 and are still in college," police said.

The woman told the police that one of the five people, who allegedly sexually assaulted her, has tattoos on his hand and chest.

Calling the alleged gangrape a sensitive case, police said police are treading carefully to ensure that the survivor's identity was not disclosed. The couple approached the Gurh police station around 1.30 pm on Tuesday.

Police said she and her husband had a fight near a fountain, about 2 km from a famous temple in the Gurh industrial area. The woman said five men took turns to rape her near the fountain, some 20 km from the district headquarters. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

THREE HOTELS IN ANDHRA RECEIVE BOMB THREATS; FIR REGISTERED

TIRUPATI, 25 OCT

Three hotels in Andhra Pradesh received bomb threat alerts via email on Friday, the police said. Tirupati East Police Station Circle Inspector Srinivasulu said, "Three hotels received bomb threat alerts. An FIR has been registered regarding the email, and the case is being investigated from various angles. We will soon trace the culprits, and those behind the email will be identified after the investigation is completed." Further details awaited. *—ANI*

JNU denies 'pressure' on cancellation of seminars

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

Asserting that it wants to provide a platform for balanced discussions, the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) on Friday said it has cancelled no seminar on the West Asian conflict but had to postpone one where Iranian Ambassador Iraj Elahi was scheduled to speak due to logistical and protocol reasons.

Amitabh Mattoo, the Dean of the School of International Studies (SIS), said the university plans to invite Elahi, who was supposed to addresses the seminar on the subject on Thursday, on a rescheduled date soon, likely next month.

He said that invitations for two other events -- on 7 November when Palestinian ambassador was supposed to speak and 14 November when Lebanese ambassador was to speak -- were not sent through official channels so there is no question of cancelling them.

His remarks comes a day after the alleged cancellation of the Iranian ambassador's seminar and two other events. *—PTI*

DELHI BREATHES FUMES

Amid air pollution, govt advises caution

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

As air pollution levels spike in many cities, the government urged all states to enhance their preparedness and strengthen the capacity of healthcare workforce to tackle the menace which is likely to worsen in the festival season and onset of winter.

The Union Health Ministry also urged the public to use public transport and avoid heavily congested areas.

In a letter to states and UTs, Director General of Health Services (DGHS) Dr Atul Goel has advised them to discourage stubble and waste burning and spread awareness among people about reducing firecrackers during festivities, promoting public transportation, limiting reliance on diesel-based generators, and curbing smoking.

"Additionally, individuals should be advised to minimise their exposure to polluted air by monitoring air quality indices through government mobile applications before venturing outdoors, avoiding heavily congested areas, and opting for cleaner fuels at home for cooking, heating, and lighting," Dr Goel said in the letter written last week. He said air pollution has recently become a serious health challenge, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) in certain states/UTs reaching moderate to poor levels. This may even worsen considering the upcoming festive season and onset of winter, he said. Air pollution is a significant contributor to acute health conditions and exacerbates the progression of chronic diseases affecting the respiratory, cardiovascular, and cerebrovascular systems.

These chronic illnesses, attributed to prolonged exposure to air pollution, often lead to an increase in premature mortality.

The adverse effects are particularly severe for vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant women, the elderly, individuals with pre-existing health conditions. *—PTI*

Health Ministry also urged the public to use public transport PHOTO: PTI

POOCH PERFECT WORLD RECORD

A Canadian man Mitchell Rudy set a new world record for walking 38 dogs simultaneously, surpassing the previous record of 36, on 5 September in Goesan, South Korea. All 38 dogs were rescued within the local community and listed in KK9R for adoption. The shelter mainly cares for rescuing dogs from puppy mills or from the meat industry of South Korea. ***PHOTO: X***

'Trees & land soaked up almost no CO2 in 2023'

It begins each day at nightfall. As the light disappears, billions of zooplankton, crustaceans and other marine organisms rise to the ocean surface to feed on microscopic algae, returning to the depths at sunrise. The waste from this frenzy – Earth's largest migration of creatures – sinks to the ocean floor, removing millions of tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere each year.

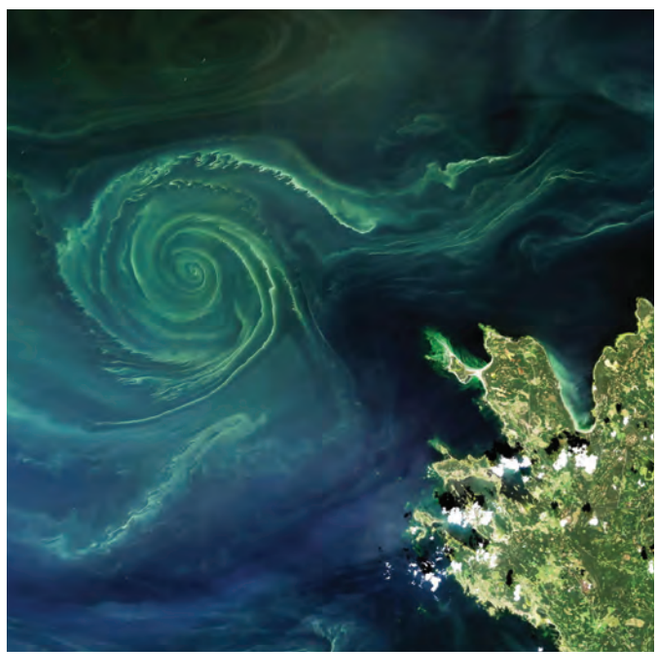
This activity is one of thousands of natural processes that regulate the Earth's climate. Together, the planet's oceans, forests, soils and other natural carbon sinks absorb about half of all human emissions.

But as the Earth heats up, scientists are increasingly concerned that those crucial processes are breaking down.

In 2023, the hottest year ever recorded, preliminary findings by an international team of researchers show the amount of carbon absorbed by land has temporarily collapsed. The final result was that forest, plants and soil – as a net category – absorbed almost no carbon.

There are warning signs at sea, too. Greenland's glaciers and Arctic ice sheets are melting faster than expected, which is disrupting the Gulf Stream ocean current and slows the rate at which oceans absorb carbon. For the algae-eating zooplankton, melting sea ice is exposing them to more sunlight – a shift scientists say could keep them in the depths for longer, disrupting the vertical migration that stores carbon on the ocean floor.

We're seeing cracks in the resilience of the Earth's systems. We're seeing massive cracks on land – terrestrial ecosystems are losing their carbon store and carbon uptake capacity, but the oceans are also showing signs of instability," Johan Rockström, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, told an event at New York Climate Week in September.



Phytoplankton in the Baltic Sea. Melting sea ice exposes algae-eating zooplankton to more sunlight, which could cut the amount of carbon stored on the seabed ***PHOTO: NASA***

At least 118 countries are relying on the land to meet national climate targets. But rising temperatures, increased extreme weather and droughts are pushing the ecosystems into uncharted territory.

The kind of rapid land sink collapse seen in 2023 has not been factored into most climate models. If it continues, it raises the prospect of rapid global heating beyond what those models have predicted.

As human emissions rose, the amount absorbed by nature increased too: higher carbon dioxide can mean plants grow faster, storing more carbon. But this balance is beginning to shift, driven by rising heat.

Only one major tropical rainforest – the Congo basin – remains a strong carbon sink that removes more than it releases into the atmosphere. Exacerbated by El Niño weather patterns, deforestation and global heating, the Amazon basin is experiencing a record-breaking drought, with rivers at an all-time low. Expansion of agriculture has turned tropical rainforests in south-east Asia into a net source of emissions in recent years.

Emissions from soil – which is the second-largest active carbon store after the oceans – are expected to increase by as much as 40% by the end of the century if they continue at the current rate, as soils become drier and microbes break them down faster.

Tim Lenton, professor of climate change and Earth system science at Exeter University, says: "We are seeing in the biosphere some surprising responses that are not what got predicted, just as we are in the climate.

A paper published in July found that while the total amount of carbon absorbed by forests between 1990 and 2019 was steady, it varied substantially by region. The boreal forests – home to about a third of all carbon found on land, which stretch across Russia, Scandinavia, Canada and Alaska – have seen a sharp fall in the amount of carbon they absorb, down more than a third due to climate crisis-related beetle outbreaks, fire and clearing for timber. Combined with the declining resilience of the Amazon and drought conditions in parts of the tropics, the hot conditions in the northern forests helped drive the collapse of the land sink in 2023 – causing a spike in the rate of atmospheric carbon.

Satellite technology has improved monitoring of forests, peatlands, permafrost and ocean cycles, but assessments and forecasts in international reports often have large error margins. That makes it difficult to predict how the world's natural carbon sinks will behave in future – and means many models do not factor in a sudden breakdown of multiple ecosystems

Many of the latest Earth systems models used by scientists include some of the effects of global heating on nature, factoring in impacts such as the dieback of the Amazon or slowing ocean currents. But events that have become major sources of emissions in recent years have not been incorporated, say scientists.

The consequences for climate targets are stark. Even a modest weakening of nature's ability to absorb carbon would mean the world would have to make much deeper cuts to greenhouse gas emissions to achieve net zero. The weakening of land sinks – which has so far been regional – also has the effect of cancelling out nations' progress on decarbonisation and progress towards climate goals, something that is proving a struggle for many countries.

In recent years, several estimates have been published on how the world could increase the amount of carbon that its forests and natural ecosystems absorb. But many researchers say the real challenge is protecting the carbon sinks and stores we already have by halting deforestation, cutting emissions and ensuring they are as healthy as possible. *—The Guardian*

SALAR سالار

What to eat & what not to during type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes affects 1.2 million Australians and accounts for 85-90% of all diabetes cases. This chronic condition is characterised by high blood glucose (sugar) levels, which carry serious health risks. Complications include heart disease, kidney failure and vision problems.

Diet is an important way people living with type 2 diabetes manage blood glucose, alongside exercise and medication. But while we know individualised, professional dietary advice improves blood glucose, it can be complex and is not always accessible.

Our new study looked at the impact of time-restricted eating – focusing on when you eat, rather than what or how much – on blood glucose levels.

What is time-restricted eating?

Time-restricted eating, also known as the 16:8 diet, became popular for weight loss around 2015. Studies have since shown it is also an effective way for people with type 2 diabetes to manage blood glucose.

Time-restricted eating involves limiting when you eat each day, rather than focusing on what you eat. You restrict eating to a window during daylight hours, for example between 11am and 7pm, and then fast for the remaining hours. This can sometimes naturally lead to also eating less.

Giving your body a break from constantly digesting food in this way helps align eating with natural circadian rhythms. This can help regulate metabolism and improve overall health.

For people with type 2 diabetes, there may be specific benefits. They often have their highest blood glucose reading in the morning. Delaying breakfast to mid-morning means there is time for physical activity to occur to help reduce glucose levels and prepare the body for the first meal.

We ran an initial study in 2018 to see whether following time-restricted eating was achievable for people with type 2 diabetes. We found participants could easily stick to this eating pattern over four weeks, for an average of five days a week.

While we know this level of support increases how likely people are to stick to the plan and improves outcomes, it is not readily available to everyday Australians living with type 2 diabetes.

In our new study, we compared time-restricted eating directly with advice from an accredited practising dietitian, to test whether results were similar across six months.

We recruited 52 people with type 2 diabetes who were currently managing their diabetes with up to two oral medications. There were 22 women and 30 men, aged between 35 and 65.

Participants were randomly divided into two groups: diet and time-restricted eating. In both groups, participants received four consultations across the first four months. During the next two months they managed diet alone, without consultation, and we continued to measure the impact on blood glucose.

In the diet group, consultations focused on changing their diet to control blood glucose, including improving diet quality (for example, eating more vegetables and limiting alcohol).

In the time-restricted eating group, advice focused on how to limit eating to a nine-hour window between 10am and 7pm.

What we found

We found time-restricted eating was as effective as the diet intervention.

Both groups had reduced blood glucose levels, with the greatest improvements occurring after the first two months. Although it wasn't an objective of the study, some participants in each group also lost weight (5-10kg).

When surveyed, participants in the time-restricted eating group said they had adjusted well and were able to follow the restricted eating window. Many told us they had family support and enjoyed earlier mealtimes together. Some also found they slept better.

After two months, people in the time-restricted group were looking for more dietary advice to further improve their health.

Is time-restricted eating achievable?

The main barriers to following time-restricted eating are social occasions, caring for others and work schedules. These factors may prevent people eating within the window.

However, there are many benefits. The message is simple, focusing on when to eat as the main diet change. This may make time-restricted eating more translatable to people from a wider variety of socio-cultural backgrounds, as the types of foods they eat don't need to change, just the timing.

Many people don't have access to more individualised support from a dietitian, and receive nutrition advice from their GP. This makes time-restricted eating an alternative – and equally effective – strategy for people with type 2 diabetes.

People should still try to stick to dietary guidelines and prioritise vegetables, fruit, wholegrains, lean meat and healthy fats.

Time-restricted eating might not be appropriate for everyone, especially people on medications which don't recommend fasting. Before trying this dietary change, it's best speak to the healthcare professional who helps you manage diabetes. *—PTI*

Diet is an important way people living with type 2 diabetes manage blood glucose, alongside exercise and medication ***PHOTO: FREEPIK***

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

All in the family: Parties give chance to kin of leaders in M'rashtra polls

While political parties often accuse rivals of dynastic politics, during elections, they do not shy away from fielding relatives of their established leaders - as the lists of candidates for the next month's Maharashtra assembly polls show.

Most of the prominent political parties in the state have so far declared at least the first list of their candidates for 20 November elections to 288 assembly seats.

From the ruling side, BJP Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena, Ajit Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party have declared the first list of candidates, while from the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) has come out with the first list so far.

Their lists show that a significant number of contenders are closely related to the current ministers, legislators or MPs, including their sons or daughters, wives and brothers or sisters.

Sreejaya Chavan, the daughter of former chief minister and Congress turncoat Ashok Chavan who joined the BJP ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, is among the kin of a political heavyweight picked by the saffron party for the November 20 contest.

She will contest from the family's traditional constituency of Bhokar in Nanded district.

Vinod Shelar, the brother of Mumbai BJP chief Ashish Shelar, has been fielded by the party from the Malad West constituency, while Ashish himself has been re-nominated from the Bandra West seat in Mumbai.

BJP has replaced its sitting MLA Babanrao Pachpute from the Shrigonda assembly constituency (in Ahilyanagar district) with his wife, Pratibha Pachpute, due to his health issues.

The saffron party has dropped the name of Ganpat Gaikwad, its MLA from Kalyan East constituency in Thane district, and instead nominated his wife, Sulabha, to contest from the same constituency. Gaikwad is currently in jail for opening fire on a Shiv Sena worker inside a police station a few months ago.

Former Union minister and Lok Sabha member Narayan Rane's son, Nitesh, is already serving as the MLA for the Kudal assembly segment. His elder brother, Nilesh, a former Lok Sabha member, has now joined the ruling Shiv Sena and is set to contest f rom Kankavali constituency, the family's home turf in Sindhudurg district.

Most of the prominent political parties in Maharashtra have so far declared at least the first list of their candidates for 20 November elections to 288 assembly seats ***PHOTO: PTI***

In Chinchwad constituency in Pune district, the BJP replaced sitting MLA Ashwini Jagtap, the wife of late party leader Laxman Jagtap, but gave ticket to his brother Shankar Jagtap. This is his first election.

Shinde-led Sena has nominated Kiran Samant, the brother of state minister Uday Samant, from the Rajapur seat in Ratnagiri district.

The family members of Shiv Sena leaders Sandipan Bhumare and Ravindra Waikar, who became members of the Lok Sabha after this year's general elections, have also been given a chance by the party from the respective constituencies that the two former MLAs represented.

While Bhumare's son Vilas will contest from the Paithan in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar district, Waikar's wife Manisha will test electoral waters from the Jogeshwari East assembly seat.

The ruling NCP already nominated Pankaj Bhujbal as the party MLC earlier this month. He is the son of senior party leader Chhagan Bhujbal, who is contesting from the Yeola assembly segment in Nashik district.

But since Bhujbal's nephew Sameer is keen on contesting the election, he will fight as an independent candidate against Sena's incumbent MLA Suhas Kande from Nandgaon constituency in Nashik.

Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena (UBT) has renominated sitting MLA Aaditya Thackeray from the Worli seat in Mumbai, while his cousin Varun Sardesai will contest his maiden election from Bandra East.

The Sena (UBT) also decided to given ticket to sitting MLA Sunil Raut, brother of the party's Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut from Vikroli seat in Mumbai.

Although the NCP (SP) has not announced its list of candidates so far, Rohit Patil, son of former home minister late R R Patil, filed his nomination as an NCP (SP) candidate from Tasgaon-Kavathe Mahankal constituency in Sangli district on Thursday.

According to party insiders, Rohit Pawar, the grandnephew of Sharad Pawar and sitting MLA from Karjat Jamkhed assembly seat in Ahilyanagar, is most likely to be renominated from the constituency.

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray, who never contested election, has fielded his son Amit from Mahim assembly seat in Mumbai. It will be his maiden election.

When asked about parties fielding relatives, political observer Abhay Deshpande said, "The established leaders want to retain their control over their constituency, and as a part of that, they develop their network and connections with the voters.

In order to continue the hold, their traditional constituency becomes safer for that particular family and hence handed over to a son or daughter as political inheritance."

"But in some cases, a party chooses someone from the family of an established leader due to reasons like the death of the leader.

For instance, Shiv Sena has fielded Suhas Babar from the Khanapur seat (in Sangli) because his MLA father Anil Babar passed away a few months back. One factor is seeking political gains from the sympathy that voters will have for the family. At the same time, it is also considered as token of gratitude from the political party to a particular family that has served it for a long time," he said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X/@nargesfnd

Iran's Nobel laureate gets extra 6-month sentence

DUBAI, 25 OCT

Iranian authorities have issued an additional six-month prison sentence against Nobel Peace Prize laureate Narges Mohammadi, a group campaigning for the activist said. The Free Narges Coalition said in a statement on Thursday that Mohammadi was sentenced on 19 October to an additional six months in prison on the charge of "disobeying and resisting orders." According to the statement, the charge was brought after Mohammadi staged a protest against the execution of another political prisoner in the women's ward of Evin Prison on 6 August. Mohammadi is the 19th woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize and the second Iranian woman after human rights activist Shirin Ebadi in 2003. *—PTI*

PHOTO: XWIKIPEDIA

Grammy-winning crooner Jack Jones dies at 86

RANCHO MIRAGE, 25 OCT

Jack Jones, a Grammy-winning crooner known for "The Love Boat" television show theme song, has died. He was 86. Jones died Wednesday night at a hospital in Rancho Mirage, California, after battling leukemia for more than two years, according to a statement from his manager, Milt Suchin. Jones began his singing career in the 1950s and in the 1960s won two Grammy Awards for best vocal performance, one on the song "Lollipops And Roses" and one on the song "Wives and Lovers". *—PTI*

15-year-old US boy charged with murder of family

SEATTLE, 25 OCT

A 15-year-old boy accused of killing his parents and three of his siblings this week east of Seattle tried to pin the slayings on his younger brother, but a sister who survived after playing dead escaped to a neighbour's house and told police who really carried out the shootings, authorities said in a court document made public on Thursday. The boy was charged on Thursday in juvenile court with five counts of aggravated murder. Under Washington state law, a hearing is required before the case can be moved into adult court. The boy killed their family because he had gotten in trouble for looking at pornography. *—PTI*

Firms to pay $102M over Baltimore bridge collapse

MARYLAND, 25 OCT

The owner and manager of the massive container ship that crashed into the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore in March have agreed to pay nearly USD 102 million to resolve a civil claim brought by the US government. The money will go toward covering the costs of the massive clean-up operation to remove about 50,000 tons of steel, concrete, and asphalt from the channel and from the ship itself. The 100,000-plus-ton ship, the MV Dali, slammed into the bridge in the early hours of March 26, as a work crew was fixing potholes. Six construction workers died in the incident as the bridge went crumbling down into the water below. Nearly two dozen crew survived. The deadly crash stopped most maritime traffic for months at the busy port, which is one of the largest on the US East Coast. ***—DW News***

Israel, Hamas hint at truce on Gaza war

Netanyahu says he welcomes Egypt's readiness on deal for release of Gaza hostages

JERUSALEM, 25 OCT

Israel said on Friday that its spy chief will attend Gaza ceasefire talks and Hamas vowed to stop fighting if a truce is reached, as long-stalled efforts to end the war appeared to gain momentum.

Previous bids to stop the year-long war have failed, though the United States has voiced hope the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar last week could serve as an opening for a deal.

A senior Hamas official said that a delegation from the group's Doha-based leadership discussed "ideas and proposals" related to a Gaza truce with Egyptian officials in Cairo on Thursday.

"Hamas has expressed readiness to stop the fighting, but Israel must commit to a ceasefire, withdraw from the Gaza Strip, allow the return of displaced people, agree to a serious prisoner exchange deal and allow the entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza," the official said.

The talks in Cairo were part of Egypt's ongoing efforts to resume ceasefire negotiations, he added. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he welcomed Egypt's readiness to reach a deal "for the release of the hostages" still held by militants in Gaza. Earlier on Thursday, the United States and Qatar said Gaza ceasefire talks would resume in the Qatari capital.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Qatar's leaders in Doha on Thursday on his 11th trip to the region since Hamas's 7 October, 2023 attack on Israel sparked the Gaza war.

During the trip, which comes less than two weeks before US elections, Blinken said that mediators would explore new options. *—Agencies*

Activists sit blindfolded to mark one year in the Hebrew calendar since the Hamas cross-border attack on Israel in Tel Aviv **PHOTO: PTI**

WAR WATCH MIDDLE EAST

Debris at site where an Israeli airstrike hit a compound housing journalists killing 3 media staffers **PHOTO: PTI**

ISRAELI STRIKES KILL 36 IN GAZA, 3 SCRIBES IN SOUTHERN LEBANON

BEIRUT, 25 OCT

Israeli strikes killed 36 people, many of them children, in Gaza and three journalists in Lebanon on Friday, as worries grew about supply shortages in Gaza and international pressure for a cease-fire mounted.

The deaths reported by Gaza health officials were the latest in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, where people have in recent days lined up for bread outside the city's only bakery in operation. They come a day after United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that Israel had accomplished its objective of "effectively dismantling" Hamas and implored both sides to revive negotiations.

Hours before Blinken was set to meet with Arab leaders in London on Friday, an Israeli airstrike on guesthouses where journalists were staying in southeast Lebanon killed three media staffers. Outside of now-collapsed buildings rented by various media outlets, cars marked "PRESS" lay covered in dust and rubble after the strike, Associated Press photos showed.

Representatives of the news networks and Lebanese politicians accused Israel of war crimes and intentionally targeting journalists. *—PTI*

S Korea slams Russia on defence pact with N Korea

SEOUL, 25 OCT

South Korea has expressed "grave concern" over Russia's bid to seal a defence pact with North Korea, which has been accused of supplying troops to Moscow for possible deployment in its war in Ukraine.

Russia's lower house of parliament on Thursday voted unanimously to endorse the treaty that commits Moscow and Pyongyang to providing "mutual assistance" if either side is attacked. The country's upper house is expected to follow suit soon. Seoul "strongly urges the immediate withdrawal of North Korean troops and the cessation of illegal cooperation", South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement on Friday. It comes a day after South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol condemned the deployment of North Korean troops to Russia as a "provocation that threatens global security" and raised the possibility of supplying Ukraine with weapons. *—Al Jazeera*

Survey shows Trump taking narrow lead over Kamala

WASHINGTON, DC, 25 OCT

With the presidential elections merely two weeks away, a new national survey from The Wall Street Journal has revealed that US Vice President Kamala Harris and former US President Donald Trump remain effectively tied with 12 days until Election Day, Politico reported.

Notably, elections in the US are slated to be held on 5 November. The poll shows Trump with 47 per cent to 45 per cent edge over Kamala Harris, an advantage that comes within the survey's margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points.

In the paper's iteration of the poll conducted in August, Harris had a 2-point advantage, which was within the margin of error, according to Politico report.

A poll conducted by Washington Post of those states released on Monday revealed Trump and Harris each with narrow leads within margin of error, Politico reported.

The poll conducted by The Wall Street Journal surveyed 1,500 registered voters between 19-22 October. According to the poll, voters are considering Trump more favourable than Harris. Trump's favourability of 48 per cent is his highest yet in the poll conducted by The Wall Street Journal, the report said.

Harris sits at 45 per cent, seeing a drop from 49 per cent in August. The two presidential candidates still have favourability below 50 per cent. *—ANI*

Donald Trump **PHOTO: PTI**

STANDING TALL

Former president Barack Obama with Democratic candidate Kamala Harris during her campaign rally at James R. Hallford Stadium in Clarkston on Thursday **PHOTO: PTI**

Kamala, Beyonce team up for Texas rally on abortion rights

HOUSTON, 25 OCT

Vice President Kamala Harris will team up with Beyonce on Saturday for a rally in solidly Republican Texas aimed at highlighting the perilous medical fallout from the state's strict abortion ban and putting the blame squarely on Donald Trump.

It's a message intended to register far beyond Texas in the political battleground states, where Harris is hoping that the aftereffects from the fall of Roe v. Wade will spur voters to turn out to support her. Women who have nearly died from sepsis and other pregnancy complications because they were unable to get proper medical care, including women who never intended to end their pregnancies are supposed to join the rally. Since abortion was restricted in Texas, the state's infant death rate increased, more babies have died of birth defects. *—PTI*

> **I want a president who reveres the constitution . Trump is running to be an American tyrant**
>
> Bruce Springsteen, US singer-songwriter

KING CHARLES TALKS ON SLAVERY ISSUE, SAYS PAST STANDS

WELLINGTON, 25 OCT

King Charles III told a summit of Commonwealth countries in Samoa on Friday that the past could not be changed as he indirectly acknowledged calls from some of Britain's former colonies for a reckoning over its role in the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

The British royal understood "the most painful aspects of our past continue to resonate," he told leaders in Apia. But Charles stopped short of mentioning financial reparations that some leaders at the event have urged and instead exhorted them to find the "right language" and an understanding of history "to guide us towards making the right choices in future where inequality exists." His remarks echoed comments a day earlier by British Prime Minister Keir Starmer that the meeting should avoid becoming mired in the past and "very, very long endless discussions about reparations." He dismissed calls from Caribbean countries for leaders to explicitly discuss redress for Britain's role in the slave trade and mention the matter in its final joint statement. *—PTI*

Trudeau refuses resignation calls from MPs

OTTAWA, 25 OCT

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has insisted that he will lead his Liberal party into the next election, dismissing a request by some party members to not run for a fourth term.

He met with his Liberal members of parliament for three hours on Wednesday, where he learned that more than 20 lawmakers from his party signed a letter asking him to step down before the next election.

On Thursday, Trudeau said there were "robust conversations" ongoing about the best way forward, but "that will happen as me as leader going into the next election".

- Trudeau channelled the star power of his father in 2015 when he reasserted the country's liberal identity after almost 10 years of Conservative party rule

No Canadian prime minister in more than a century has won four straight terms.

Trudeau's Cabinet ministers have said he had the support of the vast majority of the 153 Liberal party members of the house of commons.

The Liberals recently suffered upsets in special elections for seats representing two districts in Toronto and Montreal that the party has held for years, raising doubts about Trudeau's leadership.

The federal election could come anytime between this fall and next October. The Liberals must rely on the support of at least one major party in parliament, as they do not hold an outright majority themselves. He channelled the star power of his father in 2015 when he reasserted the country's liberal identity after almost 10 years of Conservative party rule. *—Guardian*

Justin Trudeau **PHOTO: PTI**

10 Pak cops killed in attack at check post

PESHAWAR, 25 OCT

Ten security personnel were killed and three others injured when militants attacked them at check post in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, officials said on Friday.

The security personnel were killed when a gunfight erupted following the attack on Thursday at the check post in the Daraban area of Dera Ismail Khan district, a police official said.

A contingent of troops rushed to the site immediately after the attack, the official said, adding that troops have launched a massive search operation to arrest the assailants. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has been active in the area, with several similar attacks targeting security forces.

The Pakistani government has repeatedly accused the TTP of operating from sanctuaries in Afghanistan.

There has been an uptick in the incidents of terrorism in Pakistan since the Taliban took over the government in Kabul in 2021. *—PTI*

Tropical storm Trami in Philippines leaves 82 dead

MANILA, 25 OCT

Tropical Storm Trami blew away from the northwestern Philippines on Friday, leaving at least 82 people dead in landslides and extensive flooding that forced authorities to scramble for more rescue boats to save thousands of terrified people, who were trapped, some on their roofs.

State forecasters raised the rare possibility that the storm — the 11th and one of the deadliest to hit the Philippines this year — could make a U-turn next week as it is pushed back by high-pressure winds in the South China Sea.

A Philippine provincial police chief said Friday that 49 people were killed mostly in landslides set off by Trami in Batangas province south of Manila. That brought the overall death toll from the storm to at least 82.

Eleven other villagers remain missing in Batangas.

The storm was last tracked Friday afternoon blowing 410km west of the northwestern Philippine province of Ilocos Sur with sustained winds of up to 95 kph and gusts of up to 115 kph. The Philippine weather agency, however, said it's possible that high-pressure winds and other weather factors in the South China Sea could force the storm to turn back toward the Philippines. *—PTI*

AMID DELAYS

Astronauts return to earth after 8-months

CAPE CANAVERAL, 25 OCT

Four astronauts returned to Earth on Friday after a nearly eight-month space station stay extended by Boeing's capsule trouble and Hurricane Milton.

A SpaceX capsule carrying the crew parachuted before dawn into the Gulf of Mexico just off the Florida coast after undocking from the International Space Station mid-week.

The three Americans and one Russian should have been back two months ago. But their homecoming was stalled by problems with Boeing's new Starliner astronaut capsule, which came back empty in September because of safety concerns. Then Hurricane Milton interfered, followed by another two weeks of high wind and rough seas.

SpaceX launched the four — NASA's Matthew Dominick, Michael Barratt and Jeanette Epps, and Russia's Alexander Grebenkin — in March.

The astronauts' homecoming was stalled by problems with Boeing's new Starliner astronaut capsule and hurricane Milton **PHOTO: X**

Barratt, the only space veteran going into the mission, acknowledged the support teams back home that had "to replan, retool and kind of redo everything right along with us ... and helped us to roll with all those punches."

Their replacements are the two Starliner test pilots Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams, whose own mission went from eight days to eight months, and two astronauts launched by SpaceX four weeks ago. Those four will remain up there until February.

The space station is now back to its normal crew size of seven — four Americans and three Russians — after months of overflow. *—PTI*

Gold drops ₹1,150 to ₹80,050 per 10g; silver falls ₹2,000

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

Gold price dropped Rs 1,150 to Rs 80,050 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday on slackened demand from jewellers and retailers, according to All India Sarafa Association. Silver also remained under selling pressure and slipped below the Rs 1 lakh mark by declining Rs 2,000 to Rs 99,000 per kg. The metal had closed at Rs 1.01 lakh per kg in the previous close on Thursday. Additionally, gold of 99.5 per cent purity fell Rs 350 to Rs 80,450 per 10 grams against the previous close of Rs 80,800, while the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity declined Rs 1,150 to Rs 80,050 per 10 grams against Rs 81,200 on Thursday. Silver contracts for December delivery plummeted Rs 1,134 or 1.17 per cent to Rs 95,898 per kg on bourse. Comex gold futures fell by USD 15.90 per ounce. —*PTI*

Rupee falls 1P to settle near all-time low of 84.08

MUMBAI, 25 OCT

The rupee dived deeper to settle near all-time low at 84.08 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday weighed down by a firm American currency and unprecedented foreign fund outflows. Forex traders said the selling rush by foreign investors in pursuit of better gains from the Chinese market sent the domestic equity markets into a tailspin, dragging the benchmark indices down by nearly 8 per cent in the past two weeks. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the domestic unit opened at 84.07 against the greenback and traded in a tight range of 84.07 to 84.09 during the session. The unit finally settled at 84.08 (provisional) against the dollar, 1 paisa lower from its Thursday's closing level. Meanwhile, the dollar index, was higher by 0.01 per cent at 103.93. —*PTI*

ADB commits $434.25M loan for solar in Assam

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a USD 434.25 million (about Rs 3,600 crore) loan to increase renewable energy capacity and improve energy security in Assam. Addressing the renewable energy capacity shortage in Assam is crucial to meet growing demand and reduce dependency on fossil fuels, ADB said in a statement on Friday. This project will help Assam develop a renewable energy road map and increase its solar energy capacity to achieve its target of 3,000 megawatts (MW) by 2030, it said. peak power demand. ADB will provide an additional $1 million technical assistance grant from its Clean Energy Fund under the Clean Energy Financing Partnership Facility. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X

Hardik is now a major investor in The Souled Store

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

The Souled Store, one of India's biggest lifestyle brands, has elevated its relationship with cricket icon Hardik Pandya, who has now become an investor in the company. This strategic partnership marks a significant milestone for The Souled Store as it aims to further expand its footprint in the Indian fashion industry. Hardik Pandya, who has been a brand ambassador for The Souled Store since 2022, is excited to deepen his involvement by supporting the brand's vision of being the one stop destination for trendy and top-quality products for the youth. The Souled Store and Hardik Pandya have mutually benefited from their collaboration over the past two years. —*PTI*

Investors poorer by ₹6.80L cr; Sensex plunges 660 points

NSE Nifty tanks 218.60 points or 0.90% to 24,180.80

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

Investors' wealth eroded by a whopping Rs 6.80 lakh crore on Friday as equity markets tumbled, driven by a sharp fall in IndusInd Bank shares and unabated foreign fund outflows.

Declining for the fifth straight session, equity benchmark Sensex plunged about 660 points to crash below the 80,000 level due to widespread selling pressure tracking massive foreign capital outflows and muted earnings growth.

Besides, deep losses in energy, consumer durable and industrial stocks and surging global crude prices amid geopolitical uncertainties added to the gloom, analysts said.

The BSE Sensex plummeted 662.87 points or 0.83 per cent to settle at 79,402.29. During the day, it plunged 927.18 points or 1.15 per cent to 79,137.98.

A total of 3,101 stocks declined, while 841 advanced and 79 remained unchanged on the BSE.

The NSE Nifty tanked 218.60 points or 0.90 per cent to 24,180.80. The index closed lower for the fourth consecutive week.

A total of 3,101 stocks declined, while 841 advanced and 79 remained unchanged on the BSE PHOTO: PIXABAY

On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark tanked 1,822.46 points or 2.24 per cent, and the Nifty fell by 673.25 points or 2.70 per cent.

From the 30 Sensex pack, IndusInd Bank plunged over 18.50 per cent after the firm reported a 40 per cent decline in September quarter net profit at Rs 1,331 crore, pulled down by concerns over its asset quality.

Mahindra & Mahindra, Larsen & Toubro, NTPC, Adani Ports, Tata Steel, Maruti, Bajaj Finance and Titan were also among the laggards. In contrast, Axis Bank, Hindustan Unilever, Sun Pharma and ICICI Bank were the other big gainers.

The BSE smallcap gauge declined by 2.44 per cent, and the midcap index fell by 1.48 per cent. —*PTI*

ITC shares jump 5%; IndusInd shares plunge 17%

Shares of diversified entity ITC Ltd on Friday jumped nearly 5 per cent after the firm reported a 1.8 per cent increase in consolidated net profit for the second quarter ended September 2024.

The company's stock climbed 4.58 per cent to Rs 493.50 on the BSE. At the NSE, it soared 4.62 per cent to Rs 493.50. The stock emerged as the biggest winner among the Sensex and Nifty firms.

Shares of IndusInd Bank on Friday morning tumbled nearly 17 per cent to hit the 52-week low level after the firm reported a 40 per cent decline in net profit at Rs 1,331 crore in the quarter ended September 2024.

The stock dived 16 per cent to hit the 52-week low of Rs 1,073 on the BSE.

The company's market valuation also fell by Rs 15,572.07 crore to Rs 84,053.35 crore. —*PTI*

AMICABLE NEGOTIATIONS

SpiceJet settles $4.5M dispute with SES for $2M

MUMBAI, 25 OCT

Domestic carrier SpiceJet on Friday announced it has settled a USD 4.5 million dispute with Shannon Engine Support Ltd (SES) for an aggregate sum of USD 2 million.

This settlement with SES follows three other financial agreements by the airline in recent weeks, SpiceJet said in a statement.

Both parties-- SpiceJet and Shanon Engine Support-- have reached this agreement through amicable negotiations, choosing to resolve the matter outside the courtroom, the airline said.

As part of the settlement, all ongoing litigations and disputes between the parties will be withdrawn at the appropriate forums, it added.

On 15 October, SpiceJet had announced amicably settling a US 23.39 million dispute with Aircastle (Ireland) Designated Activity Company and Wilmington Trust SP Services (Dublin) Ltd for an aggregate sum of USD 5 million.

On 9 October, the airline said it has resolved a USD 131.85 million dispute with lessors Horizon Aviation 1 Ltd, Horizon II Aviation 3 Ltd, and Horizon III Aviation 2 Ltd (under the management of Babcock & Brown Aircraft Management) for USD 22.5 million.

Prior to that, on 24 September, the company had settled a dispute with Engine Lease Finance Corpora tion (ELFC), which initially claimed USD 16.7 million, for a lower amount. —*PTI*

Goyal says no free trade pact if EU insists on opening dairy biz

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday emphasised on understanding and respecting mutual sensitivities to fast-track India-EU free trade agreement talks, and said there would be no pact if the European Union insists on opening the dairy sector.

Speaking at the Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business, the minister also said that "extraneous" issues like labour and climate change should be discussed at international forums.

"You (EU) are 27 countries, who have different priorities; India has 27 states. I may be growing apples in one state which does not permit me to open apples," he said, adding that the per capita income of EU member countries is much higher than that of the Indian states.

He also said that there is a need to focus the energies on trade and on promoting investments and deeper strategic partnerships to push the talks.

It will have to be a political decision and the negotiations cannot be left to the bureaucracy alone, the minister said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Union Ministers S Jaishankar and Piyush Goyal and others during the inauguration of the Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business 2024, in New Delhi PHOTO: PTI

"First the sensitivities between the 27-countries of the EU and my 27 states collectively as the Union of India... if we respect each other's sensitivities like with UAE, Australia and EFTA, we respected each other's sensitivities and not encroach on issues which can hurt. For example dairy, I just cannot open up dairy.

If the EU insists that I open up dairy, there is no FTA," he added. Australia did its first FTA without dairy with India as they respected India's issues. —*PTI*

IMF EVENT IN US

FM: Jobs creation most pressing global issue

WASHINGTON, 25 OCT

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has called jobs creation the most pressing global issue, given the continued economic headwinds and rapid technological changes that are reshaping the skills needed for youth to enter the job market.

She also asked the World Bank to collaborate with countries to identify high-priority skilling sectors that generate employment.

Sitharaman's remarks came during her intervention at the plenary lunch "How Should the World Bank Shape Its Future Strategic Direction and Help Clients Create More Jobs to Keep Pace with Evolving Megatrends."

She emphasised that jobs are the most pressing global issue, given the continued economic headwinds and rapid technological change that are redefining the skills required for youth to enter the job market, the Ministry of Finance said on X.

The World Bank has previ-

Nirmala Sitharaman PHOTO: PTI

ously conducted several studies on sectoral trends and their potential impact on employment, covering areas like 'green jobs,' jobs after artificial intelligence, and shifts due to changing demographics, she said on Thursday.

However, she stressed that the need for the hour is a more comprehensive, multi-sectoral analysis — one that examines how emerging trends interact and influence both job loss and job creation.

This analysis should also consider factors like geopolitical fragmentation and its effects on sectors such as food production, exports, and related employment, she added. — *PTI*

IndiGo posts ₹986 cr loss in September

The country's largest airline IndiGo on Friday reported a net loss of Rs 986.7 crore in the three months ended September, impacted by grounding of planes and higher fuel costs. The carrier had a profit of Rs 188.9 crore in the year-ago period, according to a release. IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers said the airline's growth and expansion continued as the topline grew by 14.6 per cent on a year-on-year basis in the September quarter to Rs 17,800 crore. "In a traditionally weaker, results were further impacted by headwinds related to groundings and fuel costs.: In the second quarter of this fiscal, airline's fuel costs climbed 12.8 per cent to Rs 6,605.2 crore. —*PTI*

PTC: India right place for software defined vehicles

BENGALURU, 25 OCT

Despite the slump in the Indian automotive industry, Neil Barua, newly appointed CEO of PTC, a Nasdaq-listed global software company that, among others, provides product development software to global automakers like Volkswagen, BMW, and Toyota, said India is the right place to be now.

Since taking over as the CEO and global head in February, this is Barua's first visit to India.

He was visiting Bengaluru as part of his India tour. Apart from Bengaluru and Pune, PTC has offices in Chennai and Gurgaon in India.

He also said his company is excited to be facilitating the trend that is defining the automotive industry at the moment – software defined vehicles (SDV) – by offering integrated solutions for automobile brands so that hardware subsystems that sense and act are closely integrated with the software.

Although 95 per cent of Fortune 500 discrete manufacturing companies are PTC customers, the strategy in India for PTC, is to stay focused in the verticals that allow them to have real depth. —*PTI*

JSW Steel net profit plunges over 85%

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

Steelmaker JSW Steel on Friday reported a steep fall of 85.43 per cent in its consolidated net profit at Rs 404 crore in the July-September quarter of the current fiscal, affected by lower income. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 2,773 crore in the second quarter of the last financial year. Total income decreased to Rs 39,837 crore in second quarter of current fiscal as against Rs 44,821 crore a year ago. —*PTI*

Govt unveils guidelines for seaweed imports to boost coastal economy

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

The Ministry of Fisheries announced new guidelines for live seaweed imports on Friday, aiming to address seed shortages in its growing seaweed industry and boost coastal economies.

The regulatory framework, which includes strict quarantine procedures and biosecurity measures, will allow importers to bring high-quality seaweed germplasm into the country following approval from the National Committee on Introduction of Exotic Aquatic Species.

The move comes as India targets ambitious seaweed production of 1.12 million tonnes by 2025 under its flagship Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) scheme. The country currently faces challenges in securing sufficient quality seed stock, particularly for Kappaphycus, its most commonly farmed seaweed species.

PHOTO: PIXABAY

As part of the broader initiative, the government has invested Rs 127.7 crore in a Multipurpose Seaweed Park in Tamil Nadu.

The guidelines are expected to stimulate research and development in seaweed cultivation while promoting downstream processing industries.

The framework includes post-import monitoring protocols and risk assessment procedures to prevent the introduction of pests and diseases, addressing concerns about biosecurity in India's growing seaweed sector. —*PTI*

NEW SHOPPING ESCAPADE

YouTube teams up with Flipkart, Myntra; launches shopping programme

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

YouTube on Friday launched the YouTube Shopping affiliate programme in India, that would allow eligible creators to tag products in their videos and earn revenue when viewers purchase them on retailers' site.

Announcing that the programme will roll out starting with Flipkart and Myntra, Google-owned video steaming platform termed India market as a "shining contributor" to creator economy globally.

Travis Katz, General Manager and Vice President, Shopping, YouTube, said the global success of YouTube Shopping, with over 30 billion hours of shopping-related content watched in 2023 alone, underlines the power of connecting creators, viewers, and brands in exciting new ways.

Put simply, YouTube Shopping affiliate programme allows creators to earn by recommending products, across videos, shorts and live streams. The YouTube Shopping affiliate programme builds on existing monetisation options like ads revenue, YouTube premium, brand connect, and other fan-fuelled features like channel memberships, super thanks, super chat, and super stickers, providing a comprehensive suite of tools for creators to engage and thrive on platform. —*PTI*

YouTube Shopping programme allows creators to earn by recommending products, across videos, shorts and live streams PHOTO: X

Swiggy launches 'Int'l Logins' for 27 nations

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

IPO-bound Swiggy on Friday announced the launch of its 'International Login' feature that allows people living abroad, including the US, Canada, Germany, the UK, Canada to order food for their loved ones in India.

The permanent feature allows the international users to order food, shop on Swiggy's quick commerce platform Instamart, and book tables through Dineout using its app.

Payments can be made using international credit cards or available UPI options.

"With 'International Login' (feature), those living abroad can now surprise their loved ones on special occasions. This feature, long requested by our international users, is launching just in time for the festive season," said Phani Kishan, Co-founder of Swiggy.

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM

The food and grocery delivery major filed its updated draft papers with capital markets regulator Sebi recently to raise funds through its initial public offering (IPO).

The proposed IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares worth Rs 3,750 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of 18.52 crore equity shares by existing shareholders, according to the updated draft red herring prospectus (UDRHP).

Market sources have pegged the company's IPO size at over Rs 10,000 crore. —*PTI*

NE United FC hope to halt Jamshedpur FC's winning streak

GUWAHATI, 25 OCT

Jamshedpur FC will look to continue their winning streak when they face a doughty NorthEast United FC in an away Indian Super League (ISL) match here on Saturday. Jamshedpur side is placed second on the table, having accumulated 12 points from five games, and the hosts have managed only five points from as many contests and are positioned 10th. But beyond those contrasting numbers, the Highlanders have remained unbeaten in their previous two fixtures against Red Miners. Meanwhile, scoring a goal in this match will mark NEUFC's joint-longest goal-scoring streak against JFC, between January 2021 and February 2022. NorthEast head coach Juan Pedro Benali played down the talk that his team is under pressure. *—PTI*

Tendulkar to flag off Kochi Spice Coast Marathon

KOCHI, 25 OCT

The legendary Sachin Tendulkar will flag off the Spice Coast Marathon on Sunday, with over 8000 runners set to participate in the annual event. Competition will be spread across three categories -- full marathon (42.2 km), half-marathon (21.1 km) and Fun Run (5 km). The full marathon has received over 600 entries. "The Ageas Federal Life Insurance Kochi Spice Coast Marathon has a special place in my heart. I have always dreamt of seeing India as a sporting nation, with our young and old actively playing some sport or the other and the success of this event shows that," said Tendulkar. *—PTI*

Nico shoots another 64 to lead in Zozo C'ship

INZAI CITY, 25 OCT

Nico Echavarria shot a 6-under 64 on Friday — matching his 64 on Thursday — to lead by two shots over Taylor Moore and Justin Thomas after the second round of the Zozo Championship in Japan. Thomas shot 64 and Moore carded 67 with three others just three shots off the lead including Seamus Power, who had the day's low round of 62 at the Narashino Country Club. Thomas has twice won the PGA Championship but is winless in two years on the PGA Tour. Eric Cole (67) and CT Pan (66) were also three behind heading to Saturday. Rickie Fowler, a crowd favourite in Japan because of his connections to the country, shot 64 to go with an opening 68 and was four shots back going into the weekend. Max Greyserman was also four behind after a 68. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

League upholds ruling, PSG must pay Mbappé $60M

PARIS, 25 OCT

French league's appeals commission has upheld the decision ordering French champion Paris Saint-Germain to pay Kylian Mbappé 55 million euros (USD 60 million) in unpaid wages, the league said Friday. LFP's legal commission had ruled in favour of Mbappé last month, but PSG insisted it did not owe him money and appealed. The two parties were heard again on 15 October and the verdict remained unchanged. "The club (PSG) must pay him the parts of his salary he is claiming," the LFP in an email. "This decision is not subject to (further) appeal, but can be raised before executive committee of FFF (French soccer Federation)." Mbappé previously rejected a mediation offer by the commission in his dispute with PSG, saying the club owed him three months' salary and the last third of a loyalty bonus. *—PTI*

India fail Test; NZ lead soars to 301 runs

Mitchell Santner's 7 wickets for 53 runs destroyed India on Day 2 of the 2nd Test in Pune

NZ are looking at a historic maiden Test win in India, having first come here in 1955-56 *PHOTO: X/@BCCI*

PUNE, 25 OCT

India's inadequacies against quality spin bowling stood thoroughly exposed, leaving the side staring at its first ever home Test series loss to New Zealand after the visitors claimed a formidable 301-run lead on day two of the second Test on Friday.

Tom Latham, 86, led New Zealand's charge with the bat after Mitchell Santner's brilliant 7/53 destroyed India. His knock consolidated a handy 103-run first-innings lead that the Kiwis had grabbed before reaching 198/5 at stumps.

Tom Blundell (30 not out) had Glenn Phillips (7 not out) for company when stumps were drawn. The only silver lining for India was Washington Sundar's continuing good show. He completed 11 wickets in the match, adding four more to his career-best first-innings haul of seven.

PHOTO: X/@BCCI

New Zealand are looking at a historic maiden Test series win in India, having first come here in 1955-56.

None of the New Zealand batters faced any apparent trouble batting on the pitch shortly after the star-studded Indian line-up cut a sorry figure for the second time in this series, making elementary mistakes.

In the last Test in Bengaluru, their all-time lowest score at home of 46 all-out caused India's first loss to New Zealand in 36 years in their own backyard. India haven't lost a Test series at home since their defeat to England in the 2012-13 season and their unbeaten record in 18 series since then is under serious threat now. India's highest successful chase in Tests at home was 387 against England at Chennai in December 2008.

On Friday afternoon, India folded at a mere 156 in 45.3 overs as spunky New Zealand continued to perform way better than the hosts.

As India endured yet another 'one bad session of play', six wickets fell in the morning for a mere 91 runs which made the pitch look unfavourable for batting when it was not the case. The biggest shock for India in the day arrived in the 24th over when their batting superstar Virat Kohli missed a juicy full toss from Santner to be cleaned up for a nine-ball one. *—PTI*

Ahmed's 3 wickets leave Pak at 187-7 on Day 2 of 3rd Test

RAWALPINDI, 25 OCT

Recalled leg-spinner Rehan Ahmed took three wickets on an engineered dry wicket, leading England's strong comeback in the third and final Test against Pakistan on Friday.

Saud Shakeel was holding one end up on a variable bouncy wicket and was unbeaten on 72 off 132 balls as Pakistan struggled to 180-7 at lunch on an eventful opening session of Day 2. England still leads by 80 after it got bowled out for 267, thanks largely to a gritty knock of 89 by wicketkeeper-batter Jamie Smith after off-spinner Sajid Khan had claimed a six-wicket haul.

The 22-yard strip has taken centre stage for the series decider after ground staff used industrial-sized fans and outdoor heaters to dry out the wicket and counter England's aggressive batting. And, the spinners have continued to dictate as 17 wickets have fallen in four sessions. Resuming on 73-3, captain Shan Masood and Shakeel defied spinners and stretched their stand to 53 runs on a wicket that saw 13 wickets fall on the opening day.

England had its moment to separate the left-handed pair, but Smith couldn't hold onto a sharp low edge of Shakeel when the batter was on 26 in Shoaib Bashir's third over of the day.

Pakistan levelled the series 1-1 with a resounding 152-run win in the second Test on a recycled wicket in Multan after England had recorded a memorable innings and 47-run victory in the opening Test. *—PTI*

Eng, Germany, Brazil to take part in Kho Kho World Cup

Kho Kho WC is scheduled from 13-19 January in New Delhi *PHOTO: X*

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

England, Germany, Holland and the United States will be among 24 nations participating in the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup scheduled from 13-19 January at New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Stadium, the national federation announced on Friday.

The championship will witness a diverse array of participating nations: from the African continent, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda will showcase their talent.

Asia will be represented by hosts India alongside Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, South Korea and Sri Lanka.

Europe will have participants like England, Germany, the Netherlands and Poland while North America will be represented by Canada and the United States of America.

South America will feature Brazil and Peru while Australia and New Zealand will carry the banner for Oceania.

The tournament structure will feature both men's and women's divisions, with 16 teams competing in each category. This format ensures an intense competition that will showcase the speed, strategy, and sporting excellence that Kho Kho is all about. *—PTI*

Lionel Messi *PHOTO: X/@WEAREMESSI*

Messi & Inter Miami will take on Atlanta United

FORT LAUDERDALE, 25 OCT

Inter Miami's Lionel Messi played in only one Major League Soccer loss in 2024. It was in May, at home, against Atlanta United.

Messi makes his MLS playoff debut Friday night — at home, against Atlanta United.

Inter Miami, which set the MLS records for most points and best winning percentage in the regular season, gets a big challenge right out of the gate in the playoffs by facing an Atlanta team in a best-of-three Eastern Conference first-round series. Messi is coming off a hat trick in the regular-season finale, a 6-2 romp past New England.

And even though he missed nearly half the MLS season because of injury and commitments to Argentina's national team, Messi is still a serious contender for league MVP after 20 goals and 16 assists in 19 appearances.

Atlanta got to this series by beating Montreal in a wild-card match Tuesday. Its reward: Messi, again. *—PTI*

SULTAN OF JOHOR CUP

India got off to a strong start with a fine goal from Gurjot in the 6th minute, on Friday *PHOTO: HOCKEY INDIA*

India hold NZ to a thrilling 3-3 draw

JOHOR BAHRU, 25 OCT

India colts displayed remarkable composure to finish their round-robin stage with a thrilling 3-3 draw against New Zealand at the Sultan of Johor Cup here on Friday.

Gurjot Singh (6'), Rohit (17') and Talem Priyobarta (60') put their names on the scoresheet, while drag-flicker Jonty Elmes (17', 32', 45') scored a hat-trick of goals for New Zealand.

While India continue to lead the points table with 10 points, their fate to make the final will be determined by Great Britain and Australia's matches against Japan and Malaysia respectively later in the day.

India got off to a strong start with a fine goal from Gurjot in the 6th minute.

India had a chance to extend their lead in the 8th minute after earning two back-to-back PCs but the New Zealand custodian produced outstanding saves.

To their dismay, New Zealand began the third quarter with a fine PC conversion by Elmes, who had struck for the second time. India's woes with penalty corner conversion continued in the fourth quarter as they missed a chance in the 46th minute.

New Zealand, on the other hand, came up with brilliant counter attacks in the following minutes but Indian defence held sway.

With 90 seconds left on the clock, India found a golden opportunity to equalise when they earned a PC.

This time, they found success with a splendid variation which was executed to perfection by Priyobarta, ending the thrilling encounter with a 3-3 draw. *—PTI*

20 yrs at top of chess, Carlsen to make his move

STAVANGER, 25 OCT

Few chess players enjoy Magnus Carlsen's celebrity status. A grand master at 13, refusing to play an American dogged by allegations of cheating, and venturing into the world of online chess gaming all made Norway's Carlsen a household name.

Only legends like Russia's Garry Kasparov and American Bobby Fischer can match his name recognition and Carlsen is arguably an even more dominant player. Last month, he beat both men to be named International Chess Federation's greatest ever.

"I am in a different stage in my career," he told The Associated Press. "I am not as ambitious when it comes to professional chess. I still want to play, but I don't necessarily have that hunger."

He became the world's top-ranked player in 2011. In 2013, he won the first of his five World Championships. In 2014, he achieved the highest-ever chess rating of 2882, and he has remained the undisputed world number one for the last 13 years. *—PTI*

PHOTO: GCL CHESS

Consistency vital for India to cross SF hurdle in big hockey: German's Furste

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

Presentation ceremony of the PFC India vs Germany Bilateral Hockey series *PHOTO: X/@THEHOCKEYINDIA*

Being a two-time Olympic gold-medallist, former German hockey captain Moritz Furste knows a thing or two about consistency and he feels the ability to deliver even performances in a series of games is the "little missing piece" in India's admirable resurgence in last one decade.

The Indian men's hockey team was nowhere close to the top sides of the world 15 years back but it made significant strides to win back-to-back Olympic bronze medals in Tokyo and and Paris.

The Indians are currently placed fifth in the world rankings and are seen as capable to upstage any top side in the world.

"I think 15 years ago India was far away from the top-five nations, really far away but that changed to India now being one of the 6 teams competing for medals in any tournament," Furste told PTI in an interview on the sidelines of the two-match Test series between India and Germany here that saw both teams winning a game but the latter claiming the series following a shootout.

"I feel there is still one little piece missing and that's making the final and really play for the gold medal. That's usually consistency, the Indians still really struggle to have seven games at the same level. You only get there through these games, like semifinal at the Olympics," said the player who was part of the 2008 and 2012 Olympic gold-winning German teams. *—PTI*

C'ships pull-out: Wrestlers knock minister's door

NEW DELHI, 25 OCT

A day after Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) withdrew the country's team from the upcoming World Championships, citing government "interference" in its autonomy, the affected grapplers on Friday demanded sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya's intervention to resolve the issue.

All 12-affected wrestlers, a few accompanied by their parents, reached the minister's residence here to demand his intervention. The senior World Championship in 12 non-Olympic categories is scheduled to be held in Tirana, Albania from 28 October.

With very few days left for the competition to begin, the wrestlers also tried to file a petition in the court.

WFI had on Wednesday withdrawn the Indian team from the World Championships, conveying to world governing body, UWW, that the sports ministry is interfering with its autonomy.

WFI had recently announced selection trials for the U23 and World Championships, which was challenged as contempt of court by protesting wrestlers, including Bajrang Punia, Vinesh Phogat, Sakshi Malik and her husband Satyawart. *—PTI*

CRICKET AUSTRALIA

Warner's leadership ban lifted after 6 yrs

SYDNEY, 25 OCT

David Warner's lifetime captaincy and leadership ban has been lifted by Cricket Australia, a move which could see the retired test player captain the Sydney Thunder in the Twenty20 Big Bash league this season.

Warner received the penalty for his role in the 2018 sandpaper scandal in South Africa, on top of a one-year ban from cricket, which was also imposed on Steve Smith with a lesser playing suspension given to Cameron Bancroft, who was caught on film rubbing and scuffing the ball with yellow sandpaper at a test match in Cape Town.

But the leadership sanction was lifted Friday by an independent three-member review panel who deemed the opener had met the necessary criteria.

Warner appeared before the independent panel content earlier this month. It ruled that he met the criteria to be considered for future leadership roles. "The respectful and contrite tone of his (Warner's) responses, as well as the content impressed the Review Panel and led it to the unanimous view that he was sincere and genuine in acknowledging responsibility for the conduct and in his statement that he had extreme remorse for his conduct," the panel said in a statement Friday.

Warner played his final test match in January against Pakistan, an Australian win. He has also said he will no longer play one-day internationals, only the T20 format of the game. *—PTI*

David Warner *PHOTO: PTI*